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HARDEMAN'S TABERNACLE SERMONS

A Series of Twenty-two Sermons Delivered in the Ryman Auditorium, Nashville, Tenn., March 28-April 16, 1922

BY

N. B. HARDEMAN

Acting President of Freed-Hardeman College

HENDERSON, TENN.

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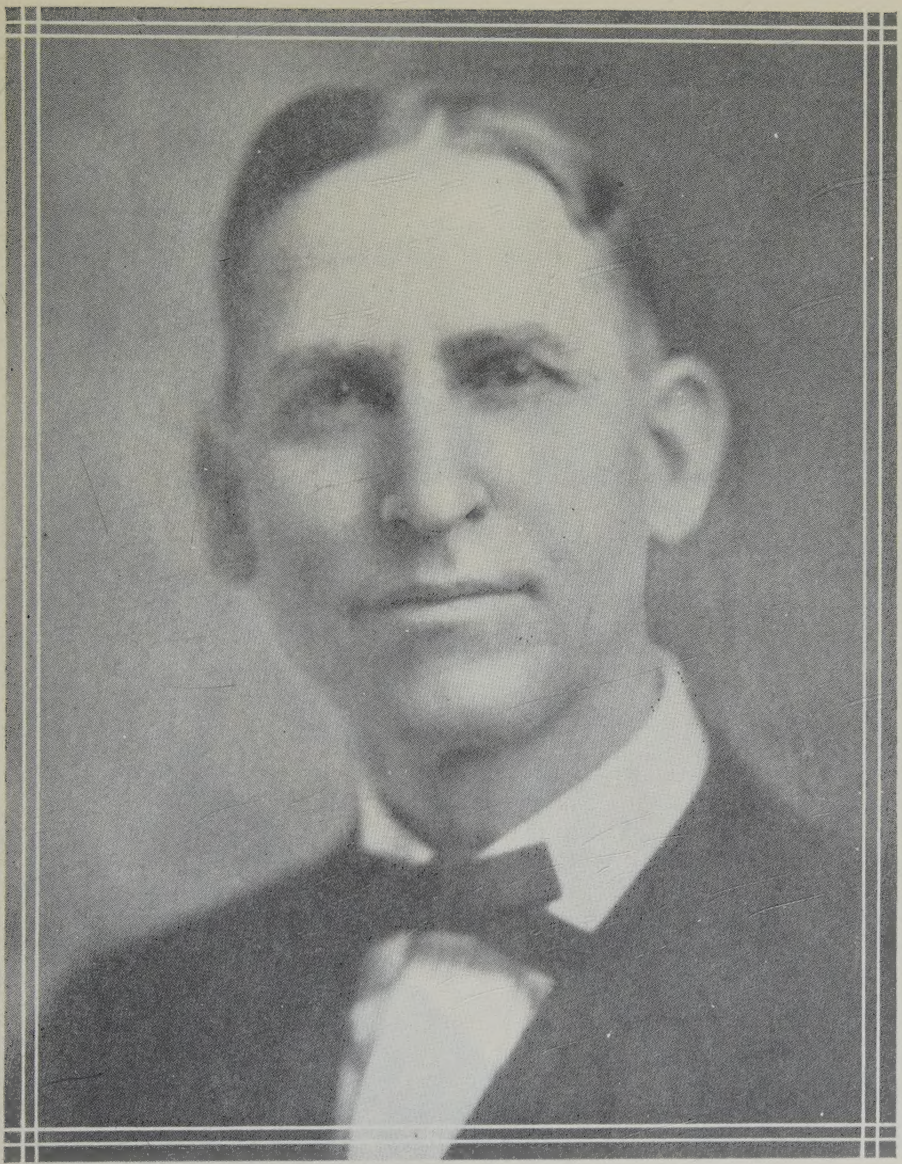

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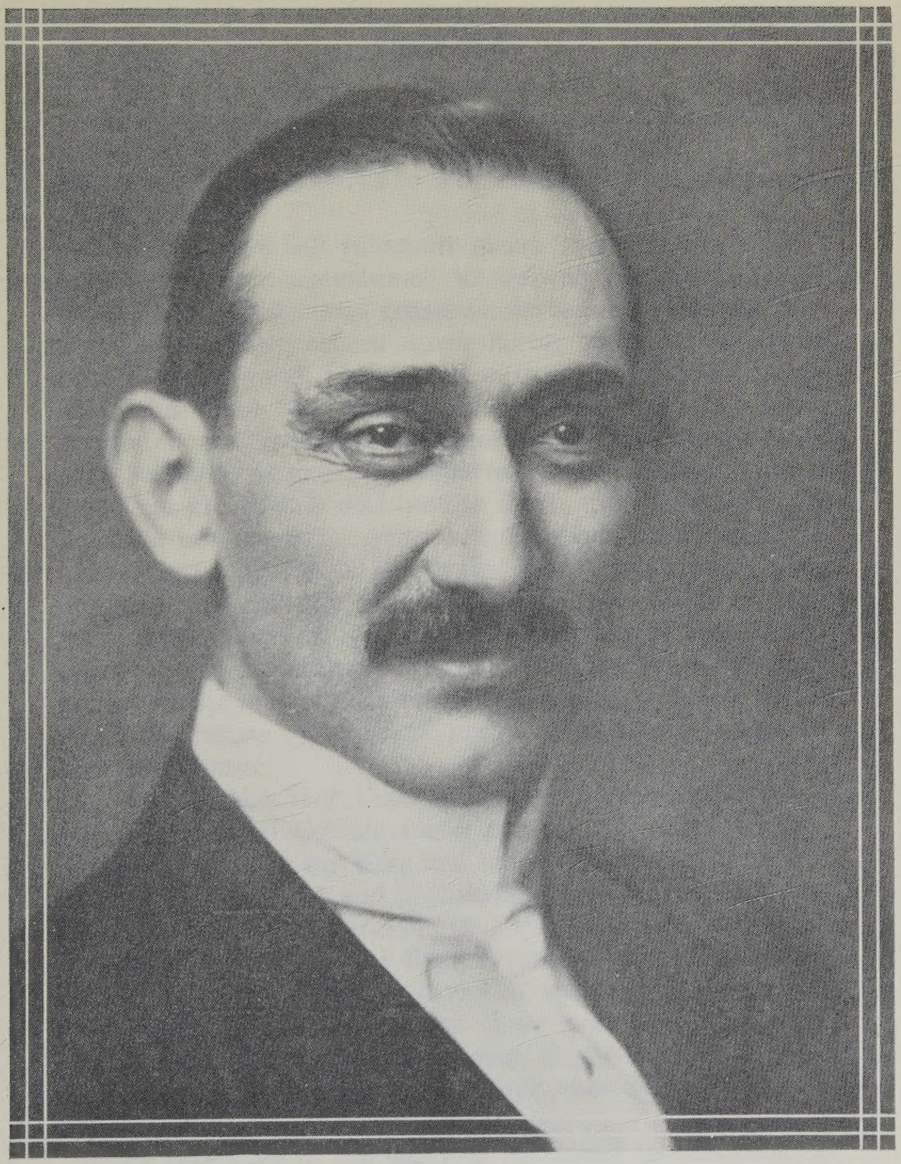

C. M. PULLIAS

PREFACE

Inasmuch as there have been many excellent volumes of evangelistic literature published by the brethren, I feel that some explanation as to why this one is being brought out is necessary.

I have always felt reluctant about "rushing into print." I have not been accustomed to writing for the religious papers for at least two reasons—first, I have known that there were many others much better prepared to do so than I; and, second, I have been so busily engaged for years that I have not been able to find the time. Friends have suggested and requested at other times that some of my speeches and sermons be reported and published; but I could not see that it was best to do so, and, therefore, did not give my consent. After I had accepted the invitation to do the preaching in the great Nashville meeting, some of those most directly concerned wrote to know if I would grant them permission to have the sermons published and the proceeds from their sale used to help defray the expenses of the meeting. Under such conditions I felt that I could not refuse my consent, and so that accounts for the present volume.

Owing to the fact that my duties in connection with Freed-Hardeman College for a number of years have required so much of my time and labor, I have not been able to give that thought and painstaking care to the preparation and delivery of sermons that the great importance of such work demands. For that reason they do not have that perfection of form and accuracy of speech that otherwise they might. Not only so, but there are few men whose speech, however attractive it may be, will read as well when reduced to cold type as it sounds when delivered orally. I realize that I am not one of that few.

With reference to the sermons contained in this book, a paragraph from the Preface of a similar volume by E. V. Zollars so fully expresses my own sentiments that I am taking the liberty to quote it: "I know that I am indebted

very deeply to what I have read and what I have heard; yet how to give the credit due, I know not, further than to say I claim no merit for originality. If the thoughts are familiar, for the most part, to many of the readers of this little volume, it is because they have enjoyed privileges similar to my own. Even if the phraseology in many cases is strikingly familiar, do not blame me; for how can I help it, since I have become thoroughly saturated with the teaching, both verbal and written? Certainly if I say many things in much the same way that others have said them, it will not be wondered at under the circumstances."

Allow me to say further in the language of the same author: "I fear that some are drifting away from the old landmarks that so clearly characterized the restoration movement in its earlier days. Some of the old themes that used to be handled with telling effect by the pioneers are now seldom preached from some pulpits. It is, however, a noticeable fact that when 'first principles' are shunned, evangelistic results are correspondingly meager. The men who are eminently successful in bringing souls to Christ are the men who preach a full gospel. Its facts, commands, and promises are all declared. Show me the man who eliminates 'first principles' from his preaching, and I will show you one who has eliminated the baptistery from his church, so far as it is of any practical service—nay, I will show you a man who is in doubt as to whether the disciples . . . have any distinctive message for the world. Let us never forget that the union of the people of God, by a return to New Testament Christianity, will be a peculiar and distinctive message, so long as Christians are divided into hostile or semihostile sects through departures from the Christianity of the apostolic day."

Many who heard these sermons delivered and who desired to read them in print requested that they be left as nearly as possible in the form in which they were spoken. Hence, in preparing the manuscripts for the printer, as few changes as possible have been made.

Acknowledgments are due Prof. L. L. Brigance, with whom I have labored for a number of years, for valuable

assistance in the preparation of the outlines from which many of these sermons were preached, and also for much labor and care in getting the manuscripts ready to be printed.

If the reading of these sermons shall cause some soul to see the beauty and simplicity of the gospel of Christ and lead it through obedience into the glorious promises thereof, the author shall feel repaid for all his efforts.

THE AUTHOR.

Henderson, Tenn., June, 1922.

To the hundreds of students who have attended Freed-Hardeman College, and especially to those young preachers of the gospel in whose preparation I have had a part, this volume is affectionately inscribed.

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, Tenn.

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HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE MEETING

For a number of years there had been a desire upon the part of many Christians in Nashville to conduct a great central meeting through the coöperative efforts of the different churches of the city. For various reasons no decisive step in that direction was taken till the early autumn of 1921. At the invitation of the Grandview Heights congregation, the first meeting to consider the matter was held in their house of worship on September 6, 1921. No constructive work was done at this meeting other than that those present agreed to place the matter before their respective congregations for action. The brethren were all agreed that if the work should be undertaken it should be done by the local congregations coöperating with each other. While they worked together, each congregation was an independent unit and was in no way bound or obligated by any action taken by others.

A number of business meetings were held at different houses of worship in the city before all of the plans of the meeting were completed. In none of these meetings was the individuality of the local congregations lost sight of, and all action taken and every decision reached was subject to their approval later.

Quite naturally, there were a number of things concerning which there was room for difference of opinion, such as the time and place for the meeting, the proper ones to do the preaching and lead the singing, the kind of song books to use, and various other details.

The brethren who attended the business meetings discussed these matters freely and fully, each urging the adoption of his views; but where no scriptural principle was involved, when it was ascertained what the will of the majority was, the minority gracefully yielded. Thus every decision was unanimous, and the believers were of one soul and one mind; and the spirit of unity, concord, and Christian fellowship continued throughout the meetings.

At the first meeting to consider the proposition, J. E.

Acuff, of the Charlotte Avenue congregation, was requested by common agreement to suggest certain brethren from the various congregations of the city to devise ways and means in a more detailed manner, each to act, however, in an advisory capacity and to serve only under the directions of the eldership of the congregation represented. Those named at the time were: George B. Farrar, of the Belmont congregation; G. S. Davis, Twelfth Avenue; R. W. Comer, Chapel Avenue; Frank Jones, Waverly-Belmont; Dr. W. Boyd, Donelson; P. W. Miller, Foster Street; L. B. Corley, Grandview Heights.

Other groups of brethren or committees who were later selected in like manner to perform the necessary preparatory work, and who were likewise to serve for the various congregations and not under any constituted authority of their own, were as follows:

Finance—Hall Cullom, Norman N. Davidson, Charles G. Akin, J. C. Lawson, R. W. Comer, S. F. Morrow, A. M. Burton, J. W. Owen, and Alex Perry.

Publicity—Paul W. Miller, Wayne Burton, A. N. Trice, John E. Cotton, James A. Allen, Lytton Alley, and W. S. Moody.

Usher Arrangements—John B. Shacklett, J. H. Sutton, E. L. Starkey, J. E. Simpkins, Robert King, W. C. DeFord, and J. N. Owen.

Song Preparations—George S. Davis, Brantley Boyd, Joe Ridley, J. T. Allen, J. W. Dickson, Roy Williams, and Edgar Stevens.

Scores of others later participated just as actively in various features of the preparatory work. Early in the year an office was established in Room 234 of the Maxwell House as a matter of convenience in dispatching the arrangements. From this office much advertising matter was distributed, both by mail and otherwise. Uniform advertising campaigns were conducted, hundreds of laborers working from the headquarters and the respective congregations in the distribution of circulars, blotters, and invitations to every home in the city.

The advertising campaign set a new precedent among

the churches of Christ. It was done in a wonderfully thorough manner. For weeks before the meeting began, various notices, references, and articles appeared in the daily papers of the city. About 100,000 blotters announcing it were distributed; 65,000 personal invitation cards were sent out; large illuminated signs were erected along the car lines; a half-page ad. appeared in both the daily papers on the day before the meeting opened; and also a page or two of the city telephone directory was assigned to different ladies of the various churches, who called everybody in Nashville that had a telephone and gave them a personal invitation to attend the meeting. The result of this thorough advertising was that when the meeting opened on Tuesday night, March 28, the great Ryman Auditorium, seating 6,000 or 8,000 people, was packed, and it was estimated that 2,000 people were turned away.

After much consultation and deliberation, N. B. Hardeman, acting president of Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, Tenn., was selected to do the preaching, and C. M. Pullias, minister of the church of Christ at Murfreesboro, Tenn., to direct the song service. That they met all expectations and justified the wisdom of their selection was attested by the fact that thousands were "singing their praises" when the meeting came to a close.

The Ryman Auditorium is said to be the largest in the State of Tennessee. It will seat from 6,000 to 8,000 people. At many of the services during this meeting it was "packed and jammed," and sometimes it was estimated that 2,000 to 3,000 persons were turned away. There is something in the presence of a great assembly of human beings that is highly emotional in its influence. It is said that when old Xerxes looked out at one time upon his great army of a million men, he was so overcome with emotion that he burst into tears. To look out upon the great multitudes that gathered during the Hardeman-Pullias meeting, and especially to hear their voices blending together in singing the praises of God, was a scene and an occasion never to be forgotten.

While Brother Hardeman was speaking to the audiences

that gathered at the Auditorium from time to time, the typesetters in the newspaper offices were only a few minutes behind him in setting up the same speech; and within a few hours thereafter the printed sermon in full was in the hands of many times the number who had heard the speech at the Auditorium, scattered for hundreds of miles in every direction. The Tennessean, with a sworn statement of circulation of forty-odd thousand, carried both the noon and night sermons; and the Nashville Banner, with a sworn circulation likewise of over forty thousand, carried the noon sermon in full; while both papers gave extensive news notices and sermon surveys. It is doubtful whether any preacher of the Restoration movement previously was ever so extensively quoted or had his sermons printed in full for so long a series by the secular papers.

Everything seemed to be right for such a meeting. The time was ripe. It was ripe from the standpoint of a strong force of loyal adherents to the cause to back the movement—a harvest of three-quarters of a century of labor of stalwart and loyal laborers in the Master's vineyard in planting the cause in Nashville. It was ripe, too, from the standpoint of a general awakening of religious interests dominating the city at the very time and season of the year at which the meetings were held. The denominations, also well represented in Nashville, had been actively engaged in revivals of great magnitude, awakening the public mind to religious interest and fervor.

Not only was the time right, but the place for such a history-making revival was strategic. In Nashville and vicinity there are forty-odd congregations, with a representation of from six thousand to ten thousand members, each of which is endeavoring to pattern after the New Testament church both in organization and manner of worship. Each is an independent unit in its respective community, self-governing, and, therefore, unhampered by overhead board or denominational control. Each is organized with its elders, or bishops, and deacons, after the pattern of the New Testament congregations, but with no other officers; and each seeks to rule in accordance with New Testament di-

rections to these officials. The congregations recognize no other board or agency as having authority in the direction of their affairs. Each congregation is governed by the Bible as its only creed or guide, and each endeavors to worship after the order of the New Testament churches, without addition or subtraction as to the items of worship therein prescribed and recorded. The membership of these congregations, while they claim no exclusive right to the name "Christian" or any other New Testament privilege, have adopted no other name for distinction from others. They prefer union with them.

The above-prescribed policy is adhered to in Nashville and community by a larger representation, perhaps, than that of any other city or community in America, thus making Nashville the American Jerusalem in the matter of restored primitive simplicity in Christianity. Thus was not only the time opportune, but the place was strategic; and the preparations for the revival began—not a few months ago, nor yet by David Lipscomb, E. G. Sewell, James A. Harding, James E. Scobey, T. B. Larimore, and a host of others of their colaborers now gray in the service; but the preparations were under way in the pioneer days of Tolbert Fanning and Philip S. Fall, who labored in Tennessee, while Samuel Rogers, J. T. Johnson, and Moses E. Lard evangelized in Kentucky, while Thomas M. Allen and the Creaths pushed the cause westward in Missouri, while William Hayden, associated much of the time with Thomas Campbell, preached to Ohioans, and while the Ohio pioneer, John Henry, was making his sixty-thousand-mile campaign on horseback and baptizing his twelve hundred converts.

The results of this meeting cannot be measured by any of us during this life. It is believed that the remote results will be far greater than the immediate. While there were about two hundred baptisms at the Auditorium and the local church houses and some twenty-five restorations, nevertheless it is thought that the influences of this combined effort of forty or more churches of Christ coöperating in a great missionary undertaking will be felt among the churches all

over the land and for many years to come. So far as is known, no meeting of such proportions has been conducted by the disciples of Christ since the days of inspiration. An old colored preacher, on the last night of the meeting, who couldn't suppress his feelings any longer, was heard to exclaim that "de only diffunce 'twixt dis an' Pentecost is dat we is jes' in Nashville 'stid o' Jerusalem."

It is believed that the big scale on which the meeting was planned, advertised, and carried out will help us to see the great interests of the kingdom in a bigger way than ever before and encourage and inspire us to put forth greater efforts to extend its borders than have ever been done in the past.

Some unusual features were, first, the almost perfect order that prevailed. Scarcely was there a whisper in the vast audiences; no one left the building, but hundreds stood many times throughout the entire service. Another was that the speaker quoted from memory his Scripture lessons and references, which were numerous, not having a Bible in the building more than once or twice during the meeting. Still another very unique feature was the song service. Thousands of voices were lifted up in singing the praises of God, and the great building was made to ring with melody; and yet no instrument of any kind, not even a tuning fork, was used. It was rather remarkable that out of perhaps three hundred songs started and led by Brother Pullias, he seemed never to have missed the pitch of one a hair's breadth. And, finally, a thing that astonished the public as much as any other was the fact that not a thing was said about money and no collection was taken from beginning to end. At the last service it was announced that all expenses had been met.

Thus came and went, perhaps, taking it all in all, the greatest meeting conducted by the churches of Christ since New Testament times.

NOTE.—The above account was compiled from notes and manuscripts prepared by Brethren J. E. Acuff and Wayne Burton, of Nashville.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, APRIL 9, 1922

HARDEMAN'S TABERNACLE SERMONS

THE BIBLE

My brethren and friends, I would be untrue to myself and to the best that in me is unless I express to you at this time my genuine appreciation, both to you and to Almighty God, for the very kindly reception you have given me, for the presence of such a splendid audience, and for the interest you thus evidence in those things that transcend the realms of time.

I rejoice that it is mine to come to the city of Nashville—a city known throughout the length and breadth of our land as one of learning, of culture, and of refinement. This is a city characterized by a religious zeal that is unsurpassed by any other in our American Union. I appreciate the fact that you have reverence for Jehovah and respect for his word. I have come, not for self-exploitation, nor publicity, nor for personal glory, but that I may be able in my humble manner to present to you the sweetest story ever told, with the hope that it may revive those who have tasted the joys of the Lord, that it may convict others and persuade them to spend their days in the service of "Him from whom all blessings flow."

As we launch into the campaign before us, I am conscious of the fact that it differs from some others that now challenge the attention of our citizenship, in that the issues are neither transient nor ephemeral, but are perpetual and eternal.

The things with which we have to deal appeal to that part of man that not only has to do with time and timely things, but that must stand in the presence of the great God of the universe at the last day and render an account for the deeds done here.

I recognize that it is not in man that lives to direct his own steps; and, therefore, it is but becoming and it quite

well behooves us to hide ourselves behind the cross of Christ and rest upon God's word. And hence the text, from Ps. 119: 105: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

I stand in your presence a firm believer in the all-sufficiency of this volume that lies before me. I realize that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." And as said in 2 Pet. 1: 3: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness."

Let me suggest to you that all this audience knows of either heaven or hell, or of the Holy Spirit, or of Christ, or of the angels, or of the boundless beyond toward which we are so rapidly passing, they have learned it either directly or indirectly from the word of God. In view of that, therefore, it is not amiss at this, our first, service to call attention to the study of this Bible as a book.

I take it that this company before me assembled accepts this book as the word of God divine. I think I speak to people who recognize that the very foundation of our country and the civilization in which we abide rests upon our faith, confidence, respect, and reverence for God's word. Will you, therefore, with me study to-night some of the things that might be interesting, helpful, and profitable regarding this wonderful volume in our midst? I submit to you, first of all, that this is among the oldest books in all the world. I am aware of the fact that others claim to antedate it, but they have been weighed in the balance and found exceeding doubtful. The Bible records events from the beginning of creation down to the year 96 A.D. Many of the things reported therein transpired long before the pyramids were built along the course of the River Nile. Let it be remembered that the songs of David and Solomon had been sung and they had gone to their rewards before the great classic poet of Greece had given the account of the Trojan War and the wanderings of Ulysses. Many of the books of the Bible were complete before the first public

library was built in the old, historic city of Athens; and all the prophets, from Isaiah to Malachi, had given us a vision of future events and had passed away before the philosophies of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle were announced. Two thousand years have passed since the Holy Spirit laid down the pen of inspiration to grasp it nevermore, during which time wonderful things in the earth have been wrought.

And yet it is strange to say that the Bible is just as applicable to the people of this hour as it was to those of the first century, when fresh it came from the hand that penned it.

I think it interesting, further, to study the character of the writings, and also of the writers, because of the peculiar and unique features thereof.

In this one library or collection there are sixty-six books, penned by practically forty different writers, stretching over a period from first to last of sixteen hundred years. And I ask: Who are they? Not a people surrounded by the advantages that characterize modern times, with all our equipment and facilities for learning, but descendants of a people that had been in bondage four hundred and thirty years, whose lives were burdened, and whose tasks were exceedingly difficult under the overseers and masters that used them to fill the already overflowing coffers of the great Egyptian government. They passed out from under that bondage by the hand of God and the leadership of Moses and wandered for forty years in the wilderness. Under Joshua they crossed the River Jordan and drove out the enemy, and finally took possession of the land promised unto their fathers. Untutored and unlearned though they were, not a literary folk by any means, scattered over a period of sixteen hundred years, writing about the same events, in a country not much larger than the county of Davidson, yet when their products are brought together and woven into one complete whole, there is not a contradiction or discrepancy of serious consideration found in the entire collection.

The Jews have never been known as a literary people; in fact, I think it well worth saying that, outside of the book

of God and perhaps the history written by Josephus, there is not a literary production from the pen of a Jew that occupies first rank in the literature of the world. As a nation, they have disintegrated and have scattered to the four quarters of the earth; their very name has become a byword among the people; and yet they have lived and have given to the world a book that is found in every civilized land 'neath the broad expanse of heaven to-night, that occupies the first place, challenges the sincerest thought of the best of all the earth; and I suggest that it is not amiss to wonder, in passing, how account for matters of this kind?

Sometimes we are asked: "Is the Bible a book noted for its science?" Is it of scientific value? Let it be modestly said that, in the commonly accepted sense of the term, it was never intended as a treatise of that kind and character; but out of all the books ever scanned by mortal man, let me say, without fear of contradiction, that it is the only one ever written of which every word is dependable and absolutely reliable. Let me say, further, that there is not a real scientific principle known that is in violation of or contradictory to the word of God. I know that throughout the ages the enemies of the word of the Lord have sought to find discrepancies. They have endeavored to discount God's volume on the ground that it is contradicted by scientific research, but they ought to bear in mind that science is yet in its infancy—that the accepted theories of yesterday are contradicted by those of to-day.

Due to a failure to understand one or both, the Bible and science have been considered by many contradictory, and the fight has been on between them. But I have an idea that in the not far distance pseudo-scientists will have reached their limits, and then real science and the Bible will set out on convergent lines that will by and by come together. Forgetting, then, the bitterness of the past in the joy of newly found truth, they will clasp hands and together cast the crowns of their triumphs—the triumphs of science and Christianity—at the feet of their common Author and God shall be proclaimed Lord of all.

I have noted as a historic fact that the civilization of

every land has had to go back, despite the claims and progress of humanity, to the foundation laid by God in that wonderful document given to Moses, and upon that the governments of earth rest as upon a foundation of adamant. Moreover, in the special relationships of man to man, let it be understood and forgotten not that we go back to the Sermon on the Mount to find the philosophy of life, and the passing of the centuries has failed to record improvements upon that found there.

I suggest this thought just now, in passing: that out of the great chaotic condition that exists in the nations of the earth there is a star of hope rising from its far-distant home—a hope indicative of better things; and that hope is this: that when man, in all his boasted vanity, has proven a failure, when the nations of this earth have gone their limits, when business men of every type shall come to themselves, they may all recognize their dependence and accept the golden rule laid down by the greatest of all teachers—viz., that we must do unto others as we would have them do unto us. Then peace and tranquillity, happiness and prosperity, will once more smile upon the earth.

I call your attention next to this particular characteristic: The Bible, unlike all books written by man, does not become obsolete with the passing of the years. That is a statement that particularly belongs to the Bible, and to it alone. It is a boasted declaration of this generation that, due to progress and learning, our textbooks used a few years ago are no longer found in the schoolrooms of to-day. Where is the old blue-back spelling book? Where are McGuffey's old readers? Where are Smiley's arithmetics and Barnes' series of histories? They have yielded to the mutations of time; and, therefore, the books that we study to-day were unknown a generation ago. The very textbooks in our schools on science will give way to-morrow for those with different theories. There must be the adoption of a more modern book. The Bible knows no such thing as passing while the ages come and go. It is ever fresh, like unto a mountain spring from which all our fathers, grandfathers, and great-grandfathers slaked their thirst in gen-

erations gone by; and still, to us, the same spring offers that drink afresh, and it will continue to offer it to those yet unborn. While it treats of the most sublime problems known to man—of God and of Christ, of heaven and of hell, of salvation and of redemption—yet the passing centuries have never added one single thought unto the statements therein found. Scientists cannot get ahead of it. Human progress cannot overtake it or get beyond it. Every generation born upon the earth finds the Bible waiting for it, with its fresh and never-failing stores of wisdom touching everything that affects the welfare of humanity.

Another characteristic of the word of God is the fact that, unlike most, if not all, of the books written by man, it can be translated into different languages and lose none of its power. I take it that this explains why the Greek and other classics of days gone by have remained in the language wherein they were penned. It has been demonstrated that a change to other tongues is but the depreciation, the sounding of the death knell, to the writings and productions of man. But here is a volume that seems to run freely into other languages. It has been translated into more than five hundred different tongues and dialects, and yet it is so plain and clear in its declarations that when we read it we scarcely stop to think that we are reading a book penned in a language other than our own.

But let me announce a stranger fact still. Of all the books the world has ever known, there has never been but one that has incurred the hatred of mortal man. Many books have been disliked, but they had only to be let alone in order to pass out of existence and to be numbered with the past. But the Bible has had a persistent and murderous enemy ever on its trail, seeking to annihilate it, to wipe it from the face of the earth. Had you ever stopped to think of the reason for such a feeling manifested toward it? The Bible has a supernatural enemy who has experienced its power, and ever since he was "knocked out in the third round" the devil has marshaled all his forces to rid the world of the sword of the Spirit.

But there is perhaps another reason which I suggest for

your study to-night, and that is this: The Bible draws an appalling picture of man. It does not proclaim his career as one of progress, ever reaching toward holy realms, but rather the reverse. It suggests his course as one of darkness rather than light, because his deeds are evil. It does not picture man as having come into adverse conditions of life by no fault of his own, nor does it represent him as using all the powers of his being in trying to overcome his situation; but it says: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Gen. 6: 5.) And then, coming down the ages to the New Testament, as revealed in Rom. 1: 29-31, the Bible pictures man as "being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." And the picture further describes him as having gone astray and walking according to the course of this world and according to the spirit that works in the children of disobedience. His wisdom is ridiculed and his deeds condemned. He is without God and without hope.

When a man looks upon that appalling scene, it is anything but encouraging and inviting; and, therefore, to rid the world of a portrait like that, the enemies have kept up the fight.

But that is not all. Let me say to you to-night, the Bible is the only thing in all this wide world that claims to exercise authority and dominion over man. That very claim is contrary to our disposition and to our nature. We are a democratic people, and love to boast of liberty, of absolute freedom; and I repeat: God's word is the only thing that comes to us and proposes to hold us accountable and amenable for our deeds and for our steps along the pathway of life. Neither does the Bible consult us nor advise with us as to how we would prefer to have it; but it speaks, indeed, as one having authority—not upon a plane

or level with mankind, but superhuman, and issues its decrees and its edicts in the form of "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not." Thus it speaks to governors and to kings, to fathers and to mothers, to masters and to servants, to the rich and to the poor, to the bond and to the free, circumscribing, therefore, our liberty and holding us in check.

The disposition of the world is to break all bonds and to know no limitations, to yield to the appetites, the passions, and the lusts of our own being; and could the enemies of the Bible get rid of it, the man of sin would be revealed and anarchy would reign triumphant over the splendid land in which we live.

But this is not all. There have been ambitious schemes and hellish purposes harbored by men—yea, by governments and by empires—to exercise dominion over other nations, regardless of their wishes and contrary to the principles of Holy Writ.

Half a century ago the imperial German Government, prompted by such hellish intent and desire of world-wide power, started out to subject the peoples of this earth. Have you ever studied their tactics along this line? They first undertook to get rid of the book of God, and by legislative enactment they drove it out at the back door of the schoolroom and said: "We will train a generation of boys and girls, not under the influence of the God of the Bible, but under the influence of the god of war." And let me say to you that but for the fact that the power of the Bible was driven out and eliminated, the black crimes and the atrocious deeds that characterize historic pages could never have been possible. When I say to you that their propaganda started forty years ago, that it spread through their government, and that its influences reached the proud land of America, I but state that which all of us have come to recognize as a fact.

German professors were dispatched to every country on earth, and we were elated and wonderfully puffed up when Germany and the language thereof was the standard of education in our own land. But, sadly, as our observation has led us to see, the faith of the youth of our own land has been

shipwrecked and the very foundation of our civilization undermined. But we are on the crest of turning back, and I am delighted to know that from various platforms educators, statesmen, and preachers are warning the people and arguing very strongly that upon the simplicity of that faith announced in Holy Writ rests the hope of our republic and of our civilization. Hence, as long as God's word stands and men respect it, no such outbreaks are possible unto a civilized people.

That no influence can be in its way, the enemy has sought to destroy the Bible from the face of the earth. May I suggest to you, as a matter of history, some of the efforts that have been made along that line? At first it was tried by physical force. The powers of church and state have been united to rid the earth of every book that bears the name of Jehovah upon it. Officers have been selected and empowered to make a detailed search into the homes to find God's word, and, if it were found, to confiscate it and bring it unto the powers that be for its absolute destruction. Edicts and decrees went forth, laws were passed, and those persons found with the Bible were subjected to fines and imprisonment—yea, unto death itself.

But the devil and his cohorts failed in a matter of that sort. Then they turned and called to their support the intellect and learning, saying: "By that means we will rid the earth of that hateful book which holds in check our ambitious schemes and desires."

The Bible has, indeed, been an anvil on which many a hammer has absolutely been worn out. Old Voltaire, in the generations gone by, proudly boasted that while it took twelve men to write it up, he would show the world that one man could write it down, and predicted that before the close of his century there would not be one found upon the earth. Following in his tracks, our own Tom Paine, who did so much for the cause of liberty and of freedom during the darkest days of the Revolution by bringing out the various issues of "The Crisis," became puffed up and inflated and turned his attention to the writing of a wonderful book that he called "The Age of Reason." This spread like wild-

fire all over the land, and vauntingly and proudly its author and his friends boasted that in fifty years the Bible would be found only in some of the museums of earth. But be it remembered that thrice fifty years have come and gone; Tom Paine has also gone the way of all the earth; his book is scarcely mentioned, read, or heard of; while every year there flows from the presses ten million copies of the book of God.

How do you explain this remarkable fact? What the philosophy? I think there is but one explanation, and that is found in the declaration of the peerless apostle to the Gentiles, when he said in Heb. 4: 12 (A. R. V.): "The word of God is living, and active." This is corroborated by Peter's declaration that the word of the Lord lives and abides forever. And in that is a peculiar remark well worthy of our consideration. I am conscious that we live in a land characterized by death; that all the things beheld by the natural eye have death and decay written thereon. I wonder, is it a fact that in this wide world of ours, that has become a veritable charnel house of death, is there one thing which the forces of corruption have been unable to touch or to destroy? I am made to understand and to believe that the word of God still lives in that inexhaustible and inextinguishable manner—yea, it lives with a life superhuman and nothing short of divine. It is comparable unto nothing, save, perhaps, the Word that was made flesh.

Jesus, the Christ, had no special marks about him to distinguish and differentiate him from the rest of his fellows. Yet he declared that in himself was life. The world believed it not. The evidence of it was not his splendid teachings nor the very fine precepts by him given, but it was that he was able to burst the bars of death asunder and to rise triumphant over the powers of the Hadean world.

The Bible does not "behave" itself, if you please, unlike other books. There is nothing about it that is especially distinguishable, and yet there is that difference between it and all the writings of man that there was between Jesus, the Christ, and the rest of the world that lived in his age.

With what I have suggested to-night as but a skeleton,

let no man present think that this is a product of mere mortal man. If so, I suggest that the matter could be clearly tested. Let man, wherever he chances to be, write a book its equal or its superior; and this he ought to do unless these twenty centuries have so dragged him down and deadened his powers that he has "evolved in the wrong direction."

I submit to you, further, that God's word has never been equaled by the literature of any nation the world has ever seen. Strange indeed that in the career of Greece and of Rome or in the great Elizabethan Age some collection of literature was not penned that would transcend in prominence and influence the word of God. Man did not write it. I want, as his counsel, to put in the plea of "not guilty."

Let me say also that the Bible belongs not to any period or to any age. It belongs to all classes of mankind and to every condition of life wherein humanity may chance to dwell.

The Bible appeals to the common characteristics and impulses of every man and woman upon the face of the earth. It comes unto the humble, unto those of contrite spirit, unto broken hearts, and gives unto them a halo of hope and a glittering star to guide every footstep further on; it comes to every man, in whatsoever station of life he may be, and challenges the very best thoughts of his being.

Indeed, the Bible is the miracle of the ages. Despite the attacks of pagans, infidels, philosophers, and pseudo-scientists, the Bible still stands forth against all such, and is more widely read, more highly respected, and more influential to-night than any other book in all the world.

Since its inspired and immortal truths were penned thousands of years ago amid the quiet hills of Palestine, wonderful changes in the affairs of men have been wrought.

I think of once lordly Egypt that has been forced to pass under the dominion of a foreign foe. The orators, the poets, the painters, the sculptors, and the architects of once glorious Greece have long since passed away, and their works have slowly, but surely, yielded to the mutations of time. Imperial Rome raised her head sublime, and

from the seven-hilled city spread abroad her power and her influence over all the nations of the earth, then humbly bowed her head and ceased to be. Desolation marks the site of old Carthage. Tyre and Sidon no longer send their ships to distant ports. The proud fleets of Spain, laden with the rich treasures of the Aztecs and of the Incas, have long since ceased to sail the seas. The picture of world-wide dominion painted by the ambitious schemes of Napoleon has long since faded, and the "man of destiny" died amid the lonely scenes of Saint Helena. Empires have been overthrown, dynasties have fallen, and the meteoric light of would-be reformers has flashed across the arched sky, only to be swept into oblivion and forgetfulness; while the Bible, a divine product, woven into the texture of human thought and history by the gradual unfolding of the ages, still stands, bidding defiance to every wave of infidelity, giving comfort and hope to Christians, and pointing sinners to the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world. It is the Book of books, that book that outshines all other books in the literary firmament, as the sun outshines the splendid planets that in their orbits revolve around him.

It is, indeed, the mariner's north star. It is the compass of every Christian to guide his frail bark across the tempestuous sea of life and finally induct him into those scenes that we expect to burst upon our enraptured visions over there. It is, indeed, a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. It lives and abides forever, and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. If you will believe it and obey it, the promises are yours. As we stand and sing the song selected, I am glad to invite you to come and do His bidding.

NOTE.—For some of the thoughts in the above sermon I am indebted to "The Fundamentals," Volume V.

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH

As a text to-night I want to read you a few verses from Second Timothy: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." (2 Tim. 2: 15-19.)

I take it as a matter of fact that the most trusted companion and beloved associate of the great apostle Paul was this young man Timothy, found by him on his second missionary tour. Him Paul took and circumcised, and from that until the close of the apostle's career they together converged their thoughts and ideas. Near the close of that eventful career of the older, two letters were addressed to this young man well worthy of being memorized and thoughtfully and earnestly studied by every youth of the land and by all those who recognize their responsibility to God.

In the fifteenth verse of the chapter thus announced I repeat the statement to Timothy: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." I submit to you that this is equally applicable to-night to all those who would have God's favor and approval upon them.

Man is a thinking being, and thus is distinguished from all the other creatures of earth. The Bible is addressed unto intelligences—not to the passions, nor the desires, nor the emotions, but to that which is high and noble, which marks the difference between us and all other things created. For that reason God has given this instruction, that

you and I study with the intent before us of being approved unto God.

Time was when man did not need such admonition; but, in view of the fact that the days of inspiration were drawing to a close and Heaven's will to mortal man was almost completed, Paul said to Timothy: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, . . . rightly dividing the word of truth."

I recall the fact very well that back during the personal ministry of the Savior on a certain occasion he said specifically: "And ye shall be brought before governors and kings. . . . Take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak." (Matt. 10: 18, 19.) Now, in instructing the apostles further with reference to the coming of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said in John 14: 26: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Then, again, as stated in chapter 16, verse 13: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come." Thus the apostles, in marching out over the territory and fields untraversed and unexplored, guided by inspiration, took the old Jerusalem blade in hand, blazed the way, peeled the sapling, knocked the bark from the respective trees, and left open the pathway directing man to salvation and redemption and the remission of sins.

After all that had been done, Paul then said to Timothy and to the rest of us: "Study that you may be able to follow the old blazes and walk in the same path and be governed and guided and directed accordingly."

Do you know that it would not do me any special good if I could open my mouth to-night and speak by direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God? Strange to you as that may seem, it is in perfect harmony and accord with the book of God; for could I so speak at this time, I would be privileged to proclaim unto you only that which now I can

do, provided I have heeded the apostles' instructions, for be it remembered that Paul said in Gal. 1: 8: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." And, to give double emphasis, he repeats and says: "As we said before, so say I now again, If any man [that gets an American, a Spaniard, a Frenchman, an Englishman, or any other man under the vast domain of heaven's realm] preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." And I am conscious of that supreme solemnity to-night.

I recognize that every time I rise in the presence of dying humanity, woe is unto me if I proclaim not the gospel of Christ. Why ought man to study? Due to the fact, first of all, that the Bible, unstudied and unsearched, is like unto a mine unworked and undeveloped. The great Klondike region of to-day, pouring forth riches from its veins of gold, is the same Klondike that has been there throughout the generations and centuries that have passed; but for years and years it remained unprofitable, undeveloped, unattractive, without benefit or usefulness to mortal man; but when the search was made by digging into things that were therein hidden and buried, treasures came forth and streams of wealth flowed out that have enriched the world.

My friends, the great mass of humanity is an honest, earnest body of people. We differ on things political, social, and religious many, many times because of the fact that the questions in which we are interested have not been studied and investigated, for study and investigation always bring out the facts.

Time was when every man in the world believed that this earth was flat; and when the great Italian geographer, Toscanelli, suggested its rotundity, and Sir John Mandeville confirmed the idea, and Columbus determined to prove it, the world laughed with scorn and ridicule; but the search and the investigation and study demonstrated that the earth is a globe that revolves upon its axis, and, therefore, brings about night and day.

Just so with reference to the word of God. Thousands

of people have passed from the stage of life and entered into the boundless beyond without ever stopping to question or express the thought solemnly to themselves: "Am I accountable unto God for the investigation of his word? Do I know whence my bearings are taken? Can I read my title clear to mansions in the sky?"

I submit to you, further, I ought to study God's word, in company with you, because of the fact that it contains all the light and revelation that the world has ever had. Occasionally I have met with people who claim to have some special relevation, who claim to know more about things sacred and eternal than do the rest of common mortals; but upon closer inspection and closer investigation, I have yet to find the man that knows one single solitary thing of the great beyond that the rest of us could not know if we apply the admonition given by Paul to Timothy. Therein, ladies and gentlemen, is the source of all light to guide our barks across the tempestuous sea and into the grandeurs and glories that we expect to burst upon our visions over there. In that book is the whole revelation, the scheme of redemption and salvation, the hope of the world, and all things for which the human heart sighs. Therefore, study it, not only with a view to this life, but with special reference to the life beyond. Let me say, it is the book which will be opened on the plains of eternal judgment, and out of the things written therein you and I will be judged and our destinies determined.

In view of such, I think it timely for us to study God's will toward mortal man; but the text assigns a reason for such. "Study to show thyself *approved* unto God"—not for the sake of public controversy, not for personal advantage over your fellows, not that you may receive the eulogy and commendation of man, but to be approved by Jehovah. "Study to show thyself approved unto God;" and if Heaven's smiles are lavishly bestowed upon you, count all things else as naught.

I trust, therefore, I may speak your sentiments that in our investigation of truth divine the one supreme object in view is that God will be pleased and that we may stand

approved in his sight. Not only so, but "study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed," and at the same time "rightly dividing the word of truth"—a workman that has no need of fear, that has nothing to be ashamed of, surrounded by a halo of light upon his countenance, conscious of the fact that God's word is the foundation upon which his hopes are founded. Study as a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, and at the same time rightly divide the word of truth, or handle aright God's book and teachings to mankind.

The last statement therein found suggests, as you will observe, the possibility of a wrong division; and I think I am not unmindful nor unconscious of the danger and confusion and chaotic scenes that have resulted because of a failure at this point.

When boys and girls come to Freed-Hardeman College, with which I have a connection, and bring us textbooks for their investigation and study, I never think, nor does any other member of that institution, of offering the advice to the boy or to the girl to "close your eyes and open the book; and wherever it opens, there begin to study." If a boy says, in arithmetic, for example, "I want to study common fractions," I know there is a certain part of that book where that particular subject is discussed; and I turn him not to bank discount nor partial payments, but unto the specific part designed to teach the subject of fractions. If he brings any other book, the same principles prevail.

When Paul said, "Rightly dividing the word of truth," I ask you: Upon what basis shall we proceed? In our old geographies right at the first there were two large maps, one facing the other—one of them on the right-hand page, showing the eastern hemisphere, and the other on the left-hand page, showing the western hemisphere. I remember, further, these hemispheres were subdivided naturally into continents, and that in the North American Continent we had still further subdivisions—viz., the Dominion of Canada, the United States, Mexico, and Central America.

When the boys began to study our own civilized land and wanted to know of the manufacturing industries of the

country, I never thought of turning to that part of the geography that discussed the great plains, but I directed them unto our New England and middle Atlantic sections, because I understood in those divisions such information could be found.

When it came to the production of corn or wheat or the raising of hogs and the fattening thereof, I turned them not to the Rockies nor to the sun-kissed coast of the Pacific, but to the North Central States, assured of the fact that I was acting in the right way. May that now serve to illustrate the fact that the Bible is divided into two great parts. As agreed upon by all, there is a blank leaf just about the center, indicating these divisions—the Old Testament of thirty-nine books, from Genesis to Malachi, and the New Testament with its twenty-seven books, from Matthew to Revelation. That there are further subdivisions admits of no possible question. What are they? We walk by faith, and I recall the fact that the Savior, in that little trip with two of his disciples to Emmaus, said, in Luke 24: 44: "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms." And when we thus follow his direction, no mistake can possibly be made.

Will you, therefore, continue, as patiently as has characterized your hearing heretofore, in the investigation of these subdivisions? I think I realize the importance of a proper division of the word of God, of a correct understanding of matters just at this point. In the survey of a piece of land, the accuracy and perfection thereof depend upon finding the beginning corner. If we can, therefore, find the proper place to begin, and there plant our Jacob's staff, and level the compass, and then run through to the close accurately, there is no question but that perfect harmony, absolute oneness, will characterize the results of every man who thus does.

Much of the confusion that exists in the religious realm is due to the fact that we have planted our tripod, our Jacob's staff, if you please, at different places from which to

take our bearing; and so long as that custom and that idea prevails, confusion on the part of honest, earnest, sincere people will evermore characterize our labors and our endeavors. Think you to-night, ladies and gentlemen, that the law of Moses is that by which we are to be governed, directed, and unto which we are accountable? If so, let me persuade you to the contrary by saying that it was never intended for a single soul beneath the shining sun or the twinkling stars except a man that was born in Abraham's house or bought with his money. There is nothing in the term "law" that suggests its application or its duration or its extent. It simply means a rule of action, a code or a principle by which men and women are to be governed or directed. It may be applicable to a special people for a limited time.

No one thinks that the laws of the city of Nashville are applicable to the people of Davidson County. The laws of Tennessee are not binding upon the people of Kentucky, nor are the people of Arkansas subject to the statutes and the laws of the "Volunteer State." So why is it that people have jumped at the conclusion and imagined that because God gave a law unto Moses, and through him unto a special people, it was intended for all time and applicable unto all men? This is one of the strangest things with which we have to do.

There are a series of questions that will, perhaps, bring out the truth respecting this part of the investigation. I want, therefore, to specifically and definitely propound them. First of all: Unto whom was the law of Moses given? In Deut. 5: 2, 3 there is this statement: "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day." That, ladies and gentlemen, was with reference to an event that transpired just about two months after Moses, by a mighty hand, had led the house of Israel out of bondage in Egypt and across the Red Sea, on the other side of which they sang the song of redemption. Passing down the eastern shore of the Red Sea, they came unto the group of mountains in the south-

ern part of that wonderful country designated as Horeb; and while the great multitudes waited below, Moses ascended the height of that historic mountain, and there, fresh from the hand of God, received the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments, which was the covenant between God and his people. That was the constitution or the great Magna Charta of a theocracy—a system of government that was to be inaugurated for a special people for a definite time. May I ask, then, as a further thought, just when this happened? The answer is forthwith from Heb. 8: 8, 9: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day [what day?] when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord."

There you have it—the time, the place, the people; those that were alive that day, descendants of that mighty host that had spent four hundred and thirty years in bondage, scattered along the shores of the River Nile.

But I ask again: Why was the law given, and how long was it intended to last? In Gal. 3: 19 Paul has this to say: "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till [and thus the limit is fixed] the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of the mediator."

The Bible student will recall the fact that four hundred and thirty years before that—namely, 1921 B.C.—God called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees and suggested unto him the promise: "Abraham, I will make of thee a great nation; I will multiply thy seed like the stars of the heavens and the sands of the seashore; I will bless them that bless thee, and I will curse them that curse thee, and in thee and thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." There was the first definite promise of salvation to mortal man.

Four hundred and thirty years after that, as Paul said, because of transgression and to bring to men a recognition

of their sinfulness, in stepped the law inaugurated and brought unto the posterity of Abraham until the Seed promised should by and by make his advent upon the earth. If you are interested to know to just whom that referred, I call your attention to Gal. 3: 16, where it is said: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

It would not be a violation, therefore, of the word of God for me to thus say that the law was added because of the transgression until the Christ should come, after which, when by him fulfilled, it was banished, obliterated, and wiped out of existence, as the further thought shall demonstrate.

But you ask again: "What bearing, what attitude, what relation did Christ sustain thereunto?" From Matt. 5: 17, 18 we have this statement, where Jesus said in that memorable Sermon on the Mount: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Thus the Savior gave his solemn declaration that he came not to destroy nor to violate the law, but he came to fill it full and to fulfill it; and thus he spent a third of a century walking and talking and moving among men in perfect harmony with and in obedience unto the law, until such opposition had been aroused, such prejudice had been engendered, that he was finally arrested, arraigned, hurried through various mock trials, and at last consigned to death outside the city's walls. Heaven veiled its face, the sun no longer shone upon the earth, all nature became clad in the very garb and habiliments of mourning, because of the fact that the Son of God had assumed the fulfillment of the triumphant and culminating purpose of his existence among men. After several of the utterances on the cross were enunciated, at last the Savior bowed his head upon a heart made to ache and said: "It is finished."

I ask you, ladies and gentlemen, what, among other things, does that embrace? Certainly there was included

that theocratic form of government, that system that reigned from Sinai to Calvary, that he came to fulfill. "I have accomplished my purpose with reference thereunto."

It would naturally follow: "What became of that wonderful document that so successfully guided them, fulfilling its purpose for the fifteen hundred years preceding?" Paul declared (Col. 2: 14) that Jesus the Christ blotted "out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."

In Eph. 2: 13-22 it is declared: "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in the ordinances; for to make in himself of twain [the Jew and Gentile] one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit."

But hear again Rom. 7: 1-7: "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man." I believe this audience under-

stands that illustration. The woman that is married unto a man is bound by the law of God, with only one exception, as long as he lives. If while husband number one lives she be married unto another man, though the courts and though the General Assembly of Tennessee may decree to the contrary, Paul says that she shall be called an "adulteress;" but if the first husband be dead, then she is loosed from the law that hitherto bound her, and is no adulteress, though she be married to husband number two. Now, see the application: "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."

But some one says: "Brother Hardeman, how do you know that Paul was talking about the law of Moses?" Well, listen further: "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." The reason I know this is Moses' law is because Paul clearly says so, in that he quotes one statement found nowhere else in all God's book except in the law of Moses. Paul said: "We are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."

And, applying the principle thus demonstrated, here is the picture that you have: The law of Moses stood back there representative of the husband; the Jew stood as the wife. So long as the law of Moses was in existence, every Jew on earth was bound in strict allegiance and regard thereunto; and while the law was still in existence, if a Jew had been married to some other law, he would have been likened unto the woman—guilty of spiritual adultery before God; but when the husband, the law, ceased to be, the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ became husband

number two, unto which, with the middle wall of partition having been torn down, the enmity no longer existing, both Jew and Gentile are privileged to be married even unto him that is raised from the dead—not unto him that walked over the Judean hills, not to the character known as Jesus of Nazareth previous to his death, but married unto him. Unto what him? Unto him that is raised from the dead.

And the man to-night that gives his church relationship and the marriage ceremony previous to the resurrection of Christ stands in violation of this plain, positive declaration of the word of God.

Let it be remembered, brethren, that you and I, as Gentiles, descendants of Japheth, were never subjected to the law of Moses. It was never applicable unto us. Its promises were never ours, neither its threats nor punishments. Strange, is it not, therefore—passingly so—that, notwithstanding two thousand years have passed since it was taken out of the way and nailed to the cross, there perhaps are people to-night, never included in it, that are blinded, deceived, and deluded by the thought that they are amenable to it?

My friends, there is a better covenant, founded upon better promises, that is applicable to-night, not to Jew alone, not to Gentile alone, but to the sons and daughters of men wherever they chance to dwell upon earth; for in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Gentile, there is neither bond nor free, male nor female—all are one. And if we be Christ's, then we transcend the limits of the law and are Abraham's seed according to the promise.

Go back to the promise given by God to Abraham four hundred and thirty years before the law, and become heirs of God according to the promise made unto him in the long ago. Thus on the pages of God's word it is clearly declared that the law is blotted out, wiped away, stricken from existence, become dead, that we might serve in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.

But I must speak just a moment with respect to the second division, and rapidly pass.

The prophecies simply mean the foretelling or the predic-

tion of events not yet come to pass. They are never destroyed, wiped away, or blotted out, but can only pass in every instance when they merge into history. Once for all, let it be said that every prophecy spoken by God has been fulfilled or is being fulfilled or will be ere time's knell shall be sounded and all the ransomed of earth gathered home.

The Psalms constitute that part of the Old Testament written in metrical units that could be sung and accompanied by the lyre. They were expressive of the emotions, sentiments, joys, prayers, and raptures that thrilled the heart. They were counted and referred to by both Christ and the Jews as a part of the law.

But may I pass over that now, in conclusion, and suggest this: that under the blood-stained banner of Jesus Christ our Lord we live to-night under a new law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which is a régime and order that is heaven-born, that is world-wide, and that is blood-bought? Induction into the privileges and the rich benedictions thereof is laid down plainly in the book of God. Unto those of you that believe the gospel with all your hearts, that genuinely and truly are willing to repent of your sins, thus to resolve by the grace of God to forsake the wrong, to abandon sin and evil relationships in every form as much as in you lies, that will publicly confess your faith in the Lord and be buried in the name of the sacred three, with the avowed purpose to walk in newness of life, and then walk it until by and by God shall touch you with the finger of his love and bid you come home, I am glad to extend Heaven's invitation while we stand and sing.

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH

(Concluded)

The text for to-night is 2 Tim. 2: 15: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

I shall spend just a moment in review of some things said last evening, that some of you who were not here may get the line of thought I endeavored to present. I called your attention to the fact that after the days of direct inspiration of the Spirit had passed, Paul gave instruction to his son, Timothy, and through him likewise to all the rest of us, to study God's word; that Paul told Timothy thus to study that he might show himself *approved* unto God—not only to show himself approved unto God, but "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." I tried to emphasize the fact that, due to improper division, much of the confusion extant to-night can certainly be traced, and in the lack of the application of this text many of our differences have their origin.

Without arguing the question at all, I presumed that no one denies the fact that the Bible is divided into two great parts—the Old Testament, given by Moses, and the New, that came by Christ. And then I raised the point further as to whether or not these had subdivisions. Such are learned from the Savior's own declaration in Luke 24: 44, where he said to the disciples: "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me." I also stated, as you will recall, that at that time the New Testament Scriptures were not written, and we have no doubt but that the Savior referred to the Old Testament, with its thirty-nine volumes.

When you commence, therefore, to read the Bible, as to just where you should turn and what part you should study

depends altogether on what you want to know. If some one were to ask me with reference to the creation of the earth, the origin of things in general, I certainly would not refer him to Acts of Apostles, because he might read that, perchance, time and again and learn but very little of these matters. If you wanted to know something about the great baptismal flood, I would be far from referring you to Paul's letter to the Romans—not that it is not good scripture, understand, but it does not propose to talk about anything of that kind. If you wanted to know something of the new Jerusalem, "the city that hath foundations," I would never think of asking you to read the book of Numbers or of Leviticus. And so let us proceed with the same good sense that ought to characterize our investigation of any other matters, upon the principle that God understands our intelligences, and wrote this book not for his own guidance, but to serve as a directory for man in his journey through this life from the cradle to the grave, from time to eternity.

I believe I raised the question as to whether or not there is anything in the term "law" that indicates its application, its universality, or the extent of its duration. I think there is not a person present who will not agree with me that no such attributes or characteristics are inherent in the very term itself, but these things must be learned from other sources.

Then, in passing still further, I suggested that this law of Moses was given unto the people that had come out of bondage in Egypt. "The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers," said Moses, "but with us, even us, who are all of us here [under sacred Sinai] alive this day." (Deut. 5: 3.) It was intended only to last until the seed should come unto whom the promise had been made. It was given because of transgression. The Lord's attitude toward it was not to violate nor to destroy it, but to fill it full; and this he did at the close of his eventful career, for while hanging suspended between heaven and earth, he bowed his head and said, "It is finished;" and thus, having yielded up the ghost, the law of Moses was ended.

When I raise the question as to what became of it, Paul

frankly and flatly declares that Jesus Christ blotted it out, took it out of the way, nailed it to the cross, and tore down the middle wall of partition between us. The law, the Ten Commandments, contained in ordinances, was given only to the Jews, and not to the Gentiles. But the new law made of the twain, Jew and Gentile, one new man. Christ reconciled both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.

But some one raises a question after this sort: "What part of the law was thus nailed to the cross?" Do you know, ladies and gentlemen, that the Bible does not talk about parts of the law? When you hear such terms as "the judicial part," "the moral part," "the ceremonial part," just remember that that is not in the book of God, but it came from the phraseology of some man who does not speak as the word of God directs. Paul said, "blotting out." Blotted out what? The law. What law, or what part of it? All of it, and nailed it to the cross.

These are the facts in the case, opinions to the contrary notwithstanding. "But," says one, "I want to file an objection. First, I want all of the Bible; and if that statement be true, that casts out a large percentage thereof." My friend, had you not better wait just a minute? Suppose I make the prediction to you Nashvillians that there is a tremendous flood coming to wipe out all humanity, and everything in whose nostrils is the breath of life, from the face of the earth; and I suggest that some of you go out into the forest and fell timber and begin preparation for the building of an ark, that will be launched upon the bosom of an ocean that has no shore, for the salvation of yourselves and your families. Some good brother says, "Brother Hardeman, that thing has already happened; I will not make preparation for anything of that sort"—thereby admitting that you do not want that part of the Bible. But you say, with reference to worship and serving God: "I want it all." Still, if that be true, my friends, we have no business with meetinghouses and places of worship in the city of Nashville; for all of us would have to take the train, go to some Eastern port, and then board a steamer and

sail across the mighty Atlantic, and, reaching old Joppa, march up thirty-two miles to Jerusalem to worship God. But even then we are not ready; for after reaching that point, we would have to find a priest of the tribe of Levi, of the house of Aaron, to offer up our sacrifices unto God. You may say: "But this is past." Indeed so. We live under a system of government and religion to-night that knows no special place, that asks no sacrifice of animals, that demands no Jewish priest.

Many there are who object to my declaration that the law of Moses, the basis of which was the Ten Commandments, has been obliterated and taken away. We fail to understand how such can be true. And yet we have no trouble in understanding other things parallel. Let me use as an illustration to-night our own beloved Tennessee. This State has had three separate and distinct Constitutions. The first one was when it was admitted into the Union—on the first day of June, 1796. Based upon this, the statutory laws were enacted, and for a number of years every good citizen respected and recognized and had due regard for the laws of the State. Then when the State grew, its resources developed, and the opportunities widened, the people said: "Our Constitution is inadequate to the growth of the State." So in 1834, under the administration of Governor Carroll, delegates were selected, a convention was called, and a second Constitution was adopted for the "Volunteer State." How do you think that delegation acted? They read very carefully Constitution number one. Every statement therein found that had proved a success, that was considered applicable, was adopted. They brought it over from Constitution number one and made it a part of Constitution number two. Some of the articles, however, were left out. From 1834 on down for thirty and six years the people observed the laws based upon the second Constitution, and not those resting upon the first that had been abolished and done away. But in the year 1870 the people, through their representatives, met again and inaugurated and adopted a third Constitution, taking parts of the first and second—those things

that had proved worth while—and made such a part of the Constitution under which we now live. Every law-abiding citizen within the borders of our State respects and observes and lives in accordance with the laws based upon Constitution number three. I observe and respect them tonight, not because they were founded in 1796, not because they were back in the Constitution of 1834, but because they are resting upon the Constitution that is now living, which proposes to exercise authority over us.

Just so in the legislative dealing with humanity by Jehovah himself there have been three separate and distinct constitutions, or dispensations, prevailing upon the earth. The first one, known as the system of Patriarchy, lasted for twenty-five hundred years—from Eden to Sinai. Then God, having called his people out of bondage and having led them to the foot of Mount Sinai, drafted and inaugurated a second constitution. Many of the things found in the first were brought over and made a part of the second. And the Jews observed these principles. Why? Not because they found them back in Patriarchy, but because they had been made a part of Judaism that lasted for fifteen hundred years more—from Sinai to Calvary. These were but preparatory, however, to the giving of that constitution that was unlimited and unrestricted. All those principles adapted to Christianity as found in the old were incorporated in the new and became effective from the day of Pentecost.

Suffice it to say that of the original Ten Commandments, nine of them were accepted by the Savior, brought over, and made a part of the New Testament dispensation; and every law-abiding citizen under the flag of high Heaven tonight respects them and is living in obedience thereunto. Other principles have been added, and hence we live under the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

But one of them—number four—which saith, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," was left out, with other records of the Jewish dispensation; and in its stead God has given us a day with sweeter memories, character-

ized especially by the triumphant resurrection of our Savior from the dead.

This New Testament, dedicated, not by the blood of animals, but by the blood of Christ himself, likewise is divided. But before I pass to these I want to call your attention to the eighth chapter of the book of Hebrews: "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount. But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he

hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." And then he said: "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (Heb. 10: 9, 10.) Hence, there is granted and given us to-night a system, a covenant, based on better promises and offering greater rewards.

Does this covenant, therefore, thus inaugurated, have its subdivisions? Naturally and quite easily understood, the New Testament is likewise divided into three parts, the first—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—properly called the *Books of Evidence,* or the Books of Testimony, the specific purpose of which is to cause men and women to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. In John 20: 30, 31 is the following, equally applicable unto the other books mentioned: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

The second division of the New Testament is properly called the *Book of Conversions*—the acts and doings of the apostles, the record of thousands that rendered obedience to the gospel of Christ and were able to pass out of darkness into light by the acceptance of his word.

The third part is the *Epistles,* addressed unto the churches, telling Christian people how to live, serve, and worship God that at last the crown may be won.

If you, therefore, to-night be an alien and a stranger and disbeliever in the Lord Jesus Christ, and wanted that part of the book addressed to you, I would not direct you to the book of Jude nor Revelation nor the Colossian letter, but to the first part of the New Testament, dealing directly with the life, character, tragic death, and final announcement on the part of the Son of God.

Just to illustrate: Let me imagine, with all kindness and courtesy to those of whom I speak, that a Jew to-night believes the Old Testament *in toto,* but denies the Sonship

of the Lord Jesus Christ. Suppose that kind of a person would consent to make investigation and search the Scriptures. I fancy that I can see him as he turns to Matthew, first chapter, and there is greeted by a long line of genealogies, carrying him back to the days of Abraham and down to the birth of Jesus Christ. I doubt not but that he halts and says: "This is exactly like the record back in the Scriptures I call my own." He reads the second chapter, which gives the decree of Herod, of the flight into Egypt, the coming back to Nazareth that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. As he reads chapter number two, he knows every statement therein respecting the Child of Nazareth has been foretold in his own Scriptures. Then his interest is aroused, and, with encouragement, he continues throughout the book of Matthew the story of the wonderful deeds and miracles wrought by him and that he is proclaimed to be the Son of God. Still interested, he passes on to Mark, only to find the former statements corroborated and emphasized; and then on to Luke, still interested, still aroused, and reads of the mighty deeds of him, until at last, like old Nicodemus, he bursts forth: "No man can do these things, except God be with him."

As that story is thus read, link after link, statement after statement, perfectly harmonious, absolutely corroborative, forming a chain of evidence complete, he is almost forced to admit that Jesus Christ is what he claims to be. He follows on until the arrest is made, the various trials are hurried through, sentences passed, and death comes, then the burial. He sees the tomb and the stone placed at the mouth thereof, and waits and watches to see the final outcome. He learns on the third day that the bars have been torn asunder and that Christ is risen indeed. He follows as the Savior leads the apostles into Galilee and gives unto them a commission that is world-wide in its scope, heaven-born in its origin, and bought with the priceless blood of the Son of God himself. He hears the Savior bid these twelve men to go to Jerusalem, and is interested to such an extent that he says: "Let me go with them." At last the Spirit comes and fills the house wherein all are seated, and he hears the

disciples speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. And then he listens to the first gospel sermon in the name of the risen King, when Peter explained the miracles and said: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." And next he says: "Whom God hath raised up. . . . Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

No wonder, then, the record declares: "When they heard this, they were pricked in their heart." They were cut to the heart; conviction had been brought; faith had been engendered; and he had, together with the others, become a believer in the fact that Christ had tasted death, that he had been buried, and that he had risen again, and had brought salvation unto the sons and daughters of men. Hence, they all said: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Still further he waits, and hears the splendid response by the apostle Peter, unto whom the keys had already been given; and as that multitude knocked for entrance, Peter injected the key, turned the bolt, and flung wide the door, saying unto those believers that were thus affected: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." The concluding verse (47) says: "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

Follow through the book of Acts of Apostles, and you find the disciples starting at Jerusalem, spreading through Ju-

dea, then to Samaria, thence to Galilee, thence to the uttermost parts of the earth, and in which record there is the account of those that yielded obedience unto the gospel of the Son of God.

Having, therefore, been led from a disbeliever into a faithful believer in the word of God, having been led from the believer's state into that of a child of God by further obedience, now what? Then comes the letters to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, addressed unto Christian men and women, unto sons and daughters of Abraham and of Sarah.

My friends, there are just three classes of humanity, wherever you may chance to go. Unbelievers constitute one class, believers a second, and Christians represent a third. God's book, the New Testament, is applicable and adapted in a specific manner unto each class therein found. Unto the unbeliever I would say: Study the first four books thereof, that faith may be yours, that conviction of the truthfulness of the claims of the Son of God may be established in your heart, life, and conscience forever. I would bid him render perfect that faith in obedience to the gospel of God's Son by meeting every stipulation and requirement laid down in the book of Acts. After having done that, heaven is still not reached, and you have but been introduced into the straight and narrow path. Then take up your line of march; continue along the path already blazed out, until by and by all shall be well.

May I suggest that all along this pathway in which humanity is to travel there are signposts on every side? Soon you come across one that suggests to you to add to your faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity.

You find another just a little further on: "Pray without ceasing." It is impossible to live that kind of life, to travel that road, unless prayer flows forth from the innermost recesses of the soul.

On another signpost I see: "Abstain from all appearance of evil." "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth."

On still another I see the sign in glittering terms bidding Christian people to practice and live the principles laid down in the Christian religion; and, still further on, the final admonition: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

I appreciate the fact, as has been indicated and mentioned especially in the prayer of the evening, that the aged brethren are among us. They have borne the heat and burden of the day for these many years. Their forms, perchance, are already bending back toward Mother Earth. Upon their brows hoary hairs are found, and on their cheeks the finger of time has marked out furrows. I appreciate the fact, my friends, that they are nearing the goal, the eternal shore, and that sea upon which all of us by and by must launch out. But, let me tell you, if you will but place your hand in that of the Savior, with a firm resolve to submit to his will, be governed, guided, and directed by his authority, he will lead you gently along the pathway of time, down its gentle slopes to life's decline, until at last your feet begin to be bathed in the waters of death; and then, somewhat shocked thereby, you stop and say: "Master, what is this?" Christ says in response, "My child, be not afraid; follow me;" and as you march still further on, you begin to recognize that the waves are soon to leap over your silvered locks; but Jesus says: "Be thou faithful; still hold fast thy hand in mine." And after a while, when the breakers burst about you and the whitecaps overleap your brow, Jesus, with a firmer grasp, initiates you into the grandeurs of our Father's home, into that "city that hath foundations," that blessed home of the soul across which the shadows never fall. Let me encourage you that have buckled on the armor of the Lord by suggesting that it is not in vain.

I would to-night that I could cause every one that is not as yet a volunteer for service under the blood-stained banner of Prince Immanuel to buckle on the armor of the Lord and to fight bravely the battles of life, until by and by the great Captain of our salvation shall bid us to stack arms on the glad plains of a never-ending eternity, there to lay aside our

battle-scarred armor and to hang our swords upon the jasper walls of that eternal city. Then, with palms of victory and with crowns of glory, we will hymn his praises while eternity rolls her endless ages on.

Therefore, if in this audience to-night there are any disposed in heart and in mind to accept the terms of salvation tendered in the New Testament, in that covenant sanctified by the blood of Christ, if you have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, if you repent of all your sins, if you publicly confess that faith before this splendid company to further your obedience in the name of the sacred three, I bid you come.

THE POWER OF GOD'S WORD

In Heb. 4: 12 you will find this statement: "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The Revised Version suggests this: "The word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword."

I am sure that in this statement there is a wonderful truth that possibly we do not fully accept or appreciate because of the fact that our attention has not been fixed upon it. We live in a land that might just as appropriately be styled "the land of the dying" as it is frequently called "the land of the living." Death and decay and passing away are written upon the wings of time and timely things.

In view of the fact that all things are transient and ephemeral in their nature, Paul boldly declares an exception to that general statement: "The word of God is living, and active." Is it not strange, therefore, that of all things beheld by mortal man upon which the forces of corruption have fastened themselves, there is one within our midst unaffected by the passing of time? The Bible has been pursued from century to century by bitter and relentless foes, but it has survived all the efforts of its enemies and the corroding influences of time. It is still "quick, and powerful."

I had occasion to speak to you this noon from the statement found in the first verse of the first chapter of this same book, where the same writer declares that God has spoken unto men. I tried to emphasize the fact that God has spoken by his Son. Since God has spoken, I ask: Is there any power, force, or effect in what he has said? Is what the Lord said vital to the salvation of the sons and daughters of men, or has it passed according to all timely things? Shall we assume that it is still living and active in our midst?

There has always been a disposition on the part of hu-

manity to minimize the word of the Lord. For some reason, not known fully to me, we seem to want some extraordinary experience. I recall that when Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was affected by that loathsome disease of leprosy, and when he was told in plain, simple language to go down to the river Jordan and dip himself seven times, that such procedure was not according to Naaman's fancy. He had it all thoroughly fixed in his mind, and said: "Behold, I thought the man of God would come to me and strike his hand upon me, and perhaps say some word, or some peculiar miraculous event would come to pass, and I would be rid of the leprosy." When it did not happen according to his opinion, he was reminded by his servants that he had better go and do what the Lord had said.

Not only have men upon earth tried to discredit the word of God, but even in hell men have sought to set aside the sacred oracles. In the sixteenth chapter of the book of Luke there is a record and story of what is called "the rich man and Lazarus," both of whom, as you know, died. One of them was buried, and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment. Then began that conversation in which he asked Father Abraham to send Lazarus to dip his finger in water and cool his tongue. When the negative answer was given and all hope of himself had been abandoned, he then said to Abraham: "Send Lazarus back to my father's house, for I have five brothers still alive, and I want you to have him warn them, lest they also come to this place of torment." But Abraham said: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." The rich man wanted God to set aside his word and in its stead perform a miracle. But Abraham insisted: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." The rich man continued to argue the question, and said: "Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent." He seemed to understand the nature of his brothers. The word of God had but little effect upon them. He seemed to think they would pay very little attention to Moses and the prophets, and insisted that if one went from the dead—something

out of the ordinary—they would repent. Then Abraham said: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

If there was ever a time for God to answer the feeble and humble petition of a soul writhing in agony and set aside the regular plan, this seemed to be the occasion; but his spiritual law is no less immutable than his natural law. So long as the law of Moses was in force, every soul was amenable and accountable to it. This should impress all men with the fact that when they reject the word of God, all hope is gone.

We have to-night not only Moses and the prophets, but, in addition, Christ and the apostles as they were guided into all truth. The word of the Lord thoroughly furnishes the man of God unto every good work. He has given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness. In view of all this, is it not strange that there are persons upon the earth seeking and expecting something separate and distinct from the word of God? There are those in our land that acknowledge the divine origin of the Bible and pose as its friends, but whose claims tend to set aside God's word in the most vital concerns of life. If men now speak as the Spirit guides them and if revelations have been made since the visions to John on Patmos isle, then the Bible is no longer our standard and complete guide; and unless you and I can uphold God's book to the world and let it be known that we propose to be governed and guided solely by it, we had just as well acknowledge that it is a book of fallacious teachings, of myths, and of old wives' tales. It is a square issue. Either God's word is our guide, either it must be respected and manifestly obeyed, or else every man can launch his boat out upon the great ocean of life and let it drift whithersoever the tide of circumstances may carry it. As for me and mine, I believe with all my heart that the word of God is living and active and powerful, which means it is full of power and adapted to the purpose intended—namely, the bringing of conviction and conversion to the sons and daughters of men.

In one of the plainest and easiest of all the Savior's par-

ables—namely, that of the sower—we have this statement: "The seed is the word of God." I know quite well, in common with you, that in every seed there must be the germ of life; that life is perpetuated, made possible, by virtue of the liveliness and the vitality that lies within the grain of corn, wheat, or whatever it may be. And it makes no difference how long that seed may have been garnered. If it came from a crop of a thousand years ago and has been preserved, wherever and whenever it may chance to be planted, regardless of who does the dropping or sowing thereof, it will produce fruit like unto the original kind; for God said in the book of Genesis that "of everything created, let it bring forth fruit after its sort and after its kind."

If, for instance, there had not been a church of God upon the earth, after the New Testament order, for the last nineteen hundred years; if all the congregations and Christian people had been blotted out and wiped off the map, but God's word still survived and you people to-night were to read, understand, and obey it, it would make of you exactly what it made on that memorable Pentecost of the long ago. It would make of you Christians only, and would cause you, by obedience to its teachings, to be members of the church of which it speaks.

Sometimes we are told, just in this connection, that of course while Jesus Christ was upon earth there was power in what he had to say, that his spoken word was effective, that it carried conviction, power, and vitality; but they tell me that all we have now is the written word, and sometimes it is spoken of in a way that tends to discredit and minimize it.

I want to raise the question: Does the mere fact that God's word has been written rather than forevermore spoken by his Son—does that tend to reduce the force or the effect or the influence thereof? Is that the principle upon which we act in our relationship one to another—namely, do we regard our oral words more sacred and binding than we do our written documents? Is it a fact that all our deeds, our mortgages, our government bonds, securities, etc.—are they rendered valueless because of the fact that

they have been written? Had we better destroy our county court clerk's office, our recorder's office, and do our business by word of mouth to give force and power thereto?

If I were buying a piece of real estate within your city limits, and from one of your best citizens, would I want to make only an oral contract? Just somehow or other I would prefer that we reduce that thing to writing and that you subscribe your name thereunto. I am more particular than this, for I would rather have it written down the second time here at the courthouse and certified by the recorder of the good county of Davidson on the ground that we believe a written document is more forceful and effective than any oral contract or agreement.

Now, to those who think there is more force and effect and power in oral statements than in the written word I want to say: I hardly think the devil himself would agree with you on a proposition of that kind. I think, by sad experience in his mighty conflict with the Son of God, that he has learned what all of us should know—viz., that "the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword."

The Savior understood full well that there is power in the word of God. If there be sufficient power and energy back of it to withstand the enemy of our race, to make possible the opening of the gates of paradise and give us an insight to the tree of life and all things that bloom in beauty and grandeur over there, it ought to be considered by you to-night as having enough power and force for the accomplishment of that which God intended—namely, the salvation of the souls of men.

In the ninth chapter of the book of John there is a very fine story told, illustrative again of the force and power of the voice of God. A young man was born blind, and the disciples came to the Savior and said: "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered: "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am

in the world, I am the light of the world." Having said this, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and anointed the eyes of the young man with the clay, and then said unto him: "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent)." The young man went and washed, and I have thought that perhaps he came back singing:

"Amazing grace—how sweet the sound!—
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost [to the beauties of this world], but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."

Do you think to-night that there was virtue in the anointing of clay? Do you think there was virtue and power in the waters of the pool of Siloam? Absolutely not. This young man did not give praise and honor to the anointing of the clay. He never, so far as history shows, looked back to the pool of Siloam as his savior, but he gave honor to whom honor was due. He recognized that the power rested in the Son of God divine, and he had only but to speak the word, and eyes that had never seen opened to behold the grandeur and glory and brilliancy of the light of God's day.

In the eleventh chapter of this same book there is another splendid story. About two miles east of Jerusalem, beyond the garden of Gethsemane, behind the Mount of Olives, was the little town of Bethany, where lived Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. With these Jesus was wont to stay. These he loved, and with them he associated. It came to pass that the brother in that home became sick. Word was sent to the Savior with reference to the same. Jesus replied: "This sickness is not unto death." Then it was that he tarried for two days, and said to the disciples gathered about him: "Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." The disciples misunderstood him, and said: "If he sleep, he shall do well." They understood that his sleep was that of rest. Then Jesus said plainly: "Lazarus is dead." As he approached that humble home, Martha went out to meet him, perhaps with tears streaming down her cheeks, and said: "If thou hadst been here, my brother had

not died." Jesus said: "Thy brother shall rise again." Then she replied: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said: "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." In the course of time, Mary, who had lingered behind, likewise came, and, as she approached the Savior, fell down at his feet, saying: "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews which also wept with her, "he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled." Then the sweetest verse of the story is: "Jesus wept." Some of the people said: "Cannot this man that hath opened the eyes of the blind—cannot he even now speak the word and bring Lazarus back?" Lazarus was buried in a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said: "Take ye away the stone." Martha cried out: "Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days." But the Savior, groaning in agony, cried with a loud voice and said: "Lazarus, come forth." And Lazarus came forth in his graveclothes, with the napkin round about his face, and the Savior said to those standing by: "Loose him, and let him go."

My friends, the power that can speak the word and cause the grave to give up its dead is the power that belongs to the word of God to-night. It is that which Paul says is living and active and effective for the purpose intended. Do you know that but for the fact that there is power in the word of God, man would have no prospect or possibility of the resurrection from the dead?

Ofttimes to the little city of the dead wherein those whom I loved and those who loved me lie sleeping to-night I have frequently gone and beheld the sacred mound, and often have I called their names and tried to commune with them in fancy's vision; but they were disturbed not from their solemn silence. All the people of Nashville might go out to your cemetery and call to loved ones sleeping, but it would avail nothing. But, thank God, there is an assurance given by the Savior, as announced in John 5: 28, when he said: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and

shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

But for the fact that in the word of God there is wonderful power—a power that defies the Hadean world and that is able to burst the bars thereof—this world would have no hope beyond the sunset's radiant glow. God's word is the power by which man is to be converted. It is the power by which he should be directed and guided in his journey through life. It is the power that will at last cause death and Hades to deliver up their dead. Our hope of immortality rests upon the power of God's word.

But that is not all. In the fourth chapter of the book of Mark there is another story illustrative of the same idea. After Jesus had spent quite a busy day in giving a series of parables to those on the western shore of Galilee, he said: "Let us pass over unto the other side." This he did that he might have occasion to rest from the multitude. The record says that he went into the rear part of the ship, and there he lay upon a pillow, bidding them to sail across the nine-mile stretch to the further shore. While the Savior slept, a mighty storm swept down upon them. The lightnings flashed, the thunders roared, and the waves became so great that they overleaped the bow and filled the ship. The mariners and those on board became frightened, and, coming to awake the Savior, said: "Master, carest thou not that we perish?"

Do you know that here is a picture true to life? While all things are running smoothly, while everything is lovely and the sky is clear, and while all is calm, we rarely ever think of an appeal to the Power supreme. When all things go according to our own fancy, we rather become puffed up and inflated, wonderfully egotistic, independent; we care for but the things of earth. But when we lose our bearing and our station among men; when the stalwart form is touched and made to feel the infirm nature; when the clouds begin to lower round us; when we look out and become conscious of the fact that life is, at best, but a brittle thread, we then begin to cry: "Lord, save me. I am conscious that

I am nearing the other shore, that death and destruction are apparently just ahead. Won't you pick me up and bear me safely across to the other shore?"

While the storm king raged and the winds blew, while the tempests rolled high, they went back and said: "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" And then it was the Savior rose and rebuked the wind and simply said: "Peace, be still." You know the result. The record says: "The wind ceased, and there was a great calm." Fear came upon those passengers, and they said one to another: "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

My friends, the power that can calm the tempest and allay the storm king's rage, that can make the ship to ride upon the bosom of the mighty deep, that can stop the winds, that can bid defiance to the physical forces of nature, is the power that characterizes the word of God. It is the power by which the world must be saved, if saved at all.

Forget it not, ye that live, two thousand years have passed, twenty centuries have smiled upon us, since the valedictory of God's book was written; yet it is just as powerful to-night as it was when fresh from the pen of inspiration.

But that is not all. I remember that in the text of the forenoon (Heb. 1: 3) Paul said that Jesus Christ is the upholder of all things. How, then, does he uphold? "By the word of his power." There are a number of things that well illustrate this principle.

I am not accustomed, may I suggest, to being in cities. I came from the country, away back close to the Tennessee River, where the train is not and where society's ways are unknown. It is, indeed, attractive to me when I see your skyscrapers towering heavenward. I have seen the preparation for these buildings being made. I have seen men dig down into the bosom of Mother Earth to lay a safe and secure foundation. For what? That it may uphold the twenty or the thirty or the forty stories that must rest upon it. And when I see this, I am made to think that Jesus Christ is the upholder of all things—not by columns

of stone, not by piers of brick, but simply "by the word of his power."

At the city of Memphis I have viewed, time and again, both the Frisco and the Harahan bridge. I saw the construction of the latter in two or three phases of its development. The waters were parted, a solid foundation was reached, and those mighty piers were erected. What for? That they might uphold that great mass of steel that spans the "Father of Waters" from the "Volunteer State" to the soil of Arkansas. There those mighty columns stand, bidding defiance to the immense volumes of water that sweep down the Mississippi Valley. On this bridge the trains pass back and forth, richly laden with human freight and human lives. The safety of it all depends upon the stability and the power of those gigantic piers that underneath it stand.

I have gazed upon your splendid bridge at the foot of Broadway, and also this one down at another part of the city, and noted the construction thereof. Wonderful indeed are the feats performed by men.

But Jesus Christ, according to Holy Writ, has but to speak the word, and all things are upheld. It is by the power of God's word that this old earth occupies its place and revolves around the sun at the enormous rate of eighteen miles a second; at the same time it rotates upon its axis at the rate of a thousand miles per hour. And you may leave this terrestrial sphere and go out to the respective sister planets of Mars and Jupiter and Saturn and Uranus, and then far beyond Neptune to all the myriads of worlds that float in space about us, even to the twinkling stars, and all are upheld by the word of God divine.

Are we an appreciative people? Do we feel grateful for the fact that God has spoken to us? Can we treat lightly and pass indifferently the message and the declaration of Him who has thus spoken unto mortal man in the plainest, simplest, easiest terms? He has announced the law of pardon to the alien sinner, to the foreigner, to the stranger. He has made known the terms of adoption, the laws of our naturalization, by means of which we may be born into

God's family. We may be translated out of darkness into light, out of the kingdom of His Satanic Majesty into the kingdom of God's dear Son. But in order that the rich provisions of heaven and the benedictions thereof may be made ours, God announces we must hear his word; not only that, but we must believe his word with all our hearts. And, in addition to that, God has suggested in that same powerful word that we must repent of all our sins—that is, resolve by the grace of God to abandon the wrong, to turn our backs upon the former career that was enmity toward God, to change about, and let that firm resolve result in a reformation of life. Short of that, any repentance is not acceptable unto the Lord. That same word, in its wonderful power and its living activity, bids us to acknowledge the Son of God before our fellows. And, again, that same wonderful word assures us of the fact that if we thus do, and live faithful thereunto, heaven will be pleased to gladly confess us as children of God, precious in the sight of Jehovah.

I need not stop to tell you, more than merely to call your attention to it, that in the same word, for reasons known to him, Jehovah has ordained it the duty of all nations to be baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. That, my friends, is in the same word of God, coördinate and in perfect harmony with the obligation on your part and mine to believe and to repent. Just why the world rebels at that, I do not know. Just why man should interpose his opinion and partially accept God's way, I never have understood. Why the prejudices against my duplicating the burial and the resurrection of my Savior, I cannot understand. All men, every character in your splendid city, will tell you that God commanded people to be baptized. It is not the authority of Hardeman. It is not of my brethren. It is not an ordinance of your city. It is not a law enacted on Capitol Hill. Neither is it a proclamation from the President at Washington. But it comes from the King of kings, the Lord of lords—Him who speaks as man never spake. It is from Him that has authority and to whom all power in heaven and earth has been

granted. And as you and I stand on the plains of that eternal judgment, that same solemn declaration—to believe the gospel, to repent of our sins, and to confess our faith to be baptized in His name—will face us. If we refuse it here, ten thousand worlds would be gladly given for one opportunity like this to-night. While truth instructs and mercy lingers, while angels look out from their heavenly regions and anxiously wait for those that may come to acknowledge the Christ, it is our pleasure once again to extend to you the invitation and pray for your response.

THE POWER OF GOD'S WORD

(Concluded)

The presence of an audience like this on Saturday evening is indeed an inspiration to me, and I rejoice to know of your interest in these lessons that have to do with things eternal.

I want to get before you Paul's charge to Timothy as found in 2 Tim. 3: 14-17 and 4: 1-8: "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

At the time Paul wrote this he was a prisoner at Rome, not knowing as yet what would be the verdict of the higher court, to which he had appealed.

Paul penned, perhaps, two-thirds of the New Testament; but out of that there are just four personal letters addressed—viz., a very short message unto Philemon, another short letter unto Titus, while two are directed to Timothy. This of itself shows the apostle's interest in this young man.

Here is a rather unique picture presented. As a rule, both men and women select for their associates and companions those of similar years; but in this case there is presented an aged apostle, his hair frosted by the passage of the years, bearing in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus, and also his most trusted friend, closest associate, a young man just budding, blooming, and blossoming into the full power of manhood.

In writing unto the Philippians, Paul said: "But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel. Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me." (Phil. 2: 19-23.)

The most solemn charge ever delivered to mortal man or clothed in human words was announced by Paul to Timothy when he said: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word." I have attended some courts in the country where I chance to live, and have heard the charges of the judge delivered to the jury and to the gentlemen of the audience at large. Many of them were impressive and attractive; but when I think of this one, delivered by the peerless apostle, in which he called to witness both God, the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Judge of the living and the dead, I can but be impressed with its weight and importance. "I bid you preach the word."

I am sure that Paul yearned for Timothy's greatest possible success; that he earnestly desired that his life should be spent in that which would bring him the highest joys

possible and render him of the greatest service to his fellows.

There are many activities of life that are attractive. There are many positions in which wonderful good can be done. The world needs its men in business affairs; likewise those that till Mother Earth, thereby supplying the needs of life. There is a place for the honorable, the upright, professional man of the world; but, according to the apostle's idea, it appears that to dedicate and consecrate one's life to the proclamation of the word of God is the highest type of men's affairs upon the earth. The one who faithfully, loyally, and earnestly devotes the best of his powers thereunto has not made a failure.

I am especially conscious of the responsibility that I assume when I rise in the presence of dying humanity. I must give an account to God for my deeds, my acts, and for the effort I make in your presence to-night. Therefore, the solemn, serious obligation of preaching the word.

O, there is much preaching in the country every day, every week throughout the year. Unfortunately, sometimes men that claim to be preachers are attracted by the exciting things of the earth—things which appeal to sentiment and to popularity. Men fail to recognize that the gospel is God's power unto salvation, and sometimes drift into the discussion of those things that are foreign to God's word. But I want to say to you, ladies and gentlemen, that the business of living, the matter of passing along through life, fulfilling the mission that God intended, is no child's play. Preaching is not a matter of mere entertainment; it is not a matter of passing away the time; but it is a solemn, serious obligation. I do appreciate the fact that there is a disposition on your part to patiently, earnestly, and encouragingly listen to what may be said just along this line.

But when Paul said to Timothy, "Preach the word," I have often wondered and studied just what is meant thereby. Three short terms, monosyllables, in the charge; and yet how much is comprehended therein! Will you go with me upon a little survey of the word of God to find out just what that means, if possible? After the stoning of Ste-

phen, the Bible says the disciples at Jerusalem, except the apostles, were scattered abroad and went everywhere preaching the word. This account is found in Acts 8: 1-4. That is the very thing that Paul told Timothy to preach, but I have learned nothing especially as to what it means by that quotation; but in verse 5, immediately following, the writer of the book of Acts takes up the story and says: "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them." Did Philip preach something different from the rest of them, guided as he was by the same Spirit? We do not believe that there was a difference in their preaching; so we have learned that when the apostle said, "Preach the word," it is equivalent to saying, "Preach Christ." But after Philip reached the city of Samaria, the record says in verse 12: "When they [the Samaritans] believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ." Now, what were they all doing? All were preaching the word. Philip, what are you doing? "I am preaching Christ. I am preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ."

In conclusion, these three things, therefore, are interchangeably used to express the very same idea.

But presently the angel of the Lord appeared and bade Philip go down southward from Jerusalem to Gaza, which is desert. He arose and went, and came in contact with a man anxiously trying to learn his duty. In verse 35, therefore, the record says that "Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." Hence, there are four terms—"preach the word," "preach Christ," "preach the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Christ," and "preach Jesus."

But that is not all. Paul said in 1 Cor. 9: 16: "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" Hence, the five expressions, characterizing identically the same thought when he said to his beloved son: "Preach the word." Well, he might have said, "preach Christ," or "preach the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Christ," or "preach Jesus," or "preach the gospel"—all of which is

the embodiment of that upon which the salvation of the souls of men depend.

I would suggest to you that out of the multiplicity of sermons proclaimed by various ones, there was not a single contradiction or discrepancy regarding any of the statements thus made. The reason therefor is the fact that all were guided by the Spirit of God. They spake the same things and were of one mind and of one heart.

If you will let me say it, I think there is no more productive field of infidelity in all the world to-night than the fact that sometimes professed preachers of the gospel proclaim doctrines that are contradictory, one arguing for one point and the other denying the same, and both of them claiming to be governed and guided directly by the Spirit of God. Make me believe that God is back of that contradiction, and I am ready to raise the black flag of infidelity and blight the hopes of mankind the rest of my days. God is not the God of confusion, but his word runs in parallel lines. It is the truth. One statement therein never contradicts another.

But Paul said: "Preach the word." I raise, perhaps, the most important query of the night. I want to ask: Why did Paul thus charge his son, Timothy? Why spend the days of the long life that was promised in preaching the word? If there be no power, no force, or no effect to be accomplished thereby; if in the matter of conviction and conversion men and women are saved independent of the gospel of Christ, then I raise the question: Why did Paul thus charge Timothy? Why not say: "Timothy, engage in some other line of activity. Spend the rest of your days in other fields, and let the preaching of the gospel take care of itself; and in God's own time and manner, separate and apart from the gospel, men and women will be saved?"

Well, as a matter of fact, under the commission that was given by Christ to the twelve, the record fails to make mention of a single case of conversion in all their dealings unless in connection with said conversion God's word was there proclaimed as his power unto salvation. I know that sometimes men now—thoughtlessly, perhaps—claim to have

been converted before they ever heard of the gospel, before they knew anything about the gospel. Just put it down, once for all, that such a case of conversion is unlike those recorded in the book of God.

But when I ask, "Why preach the word?" I am ready to make before this splendid audience this statement as a matter of challenging your investigation (hear it): There is not a single step that man is called upon to take, from the time he leaves the world of sin and wickedness and woe until at last he sweeps through the gates that stand ajar to receive the golden crown, but that said step is affected either directly or indirectly by the word of God.

I will be in your city for several days yet. If any man should find an exception to that, it would be a favor rendered to let me know it, because, if I know my heart, I have but one supreme intent, and that is to be true in the proclamation of the word of God. I cannot afford to speak other than those things which careful study and prayerful investigation have led me to believe to be true.

I know that in this audience and in the world at large there are differences among people that ought to be one. While that is true, there are some things of common interest and general acceptation agreed upon by every man that professes to love the word of God. I want to speak to you, therefore, plainly about some vital questions that you and I have to answer. I do it with the greatest degree of kindness and with the earnest hope that the truth may be seen and that all may speak the same thing.

Ladies and gentlemen, all of us believe that before a man can enter the kingdom of heaven he must be begotten preparatory to a new birth, without which the Savior said he cannot see the kingdom of heaven. As a matter of fact, no person accountable unto Jehovah has ever been saved on earth under the reign of the gospel that has not been begotten and born again. Nobody questions that statement. People of all religious faiths grant the truthfulness of that sublime statement. Is it not strange that when I raise the next question, confusion results and opinions prevail? But it must be put. How is a sinner begotten?

There are, doubtless, sinners in this congregation who will grant that, according to the Bible, they must be begotten. I am here as your friend, trying to fulfill that which I believe God would have me do—viz., to assist you in finding out Heaven's manner of accomplishing that thing. I would do you no good if I were simply to try to impress upon you the necessity of your being begotten, and yet leave you without information as to how the thing is done. And I want to say to you in advance: I propose not to give my opinion nor my interpretation nor my comment upon the word of God, but simply and plainly to repeat the passages, believing that God means what he says and says what he means.

How is a man begotten? In Heb. 4: 12 there is a passage that indicates some characteristics of this question. Paul said: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." But that does not tell how man is begotten. That just gives a particular feature of the word of God. Well, let's try again.

This time I call your attention to 1 Cor. 4: 15. Paul said: "Though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." My friends, that is what I believe about it. Why? Because that is what Paul said. How is it? "Though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." How? "Through the gospel."

But let me ask James what he has to say on the same thing. James (1: 18) says: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth."

I can now begin to see why Paul wanted Timothy to preach the word. It is that by which men are begotten.

But in 1 Pet. 1: 23 there is this statement: "Being born again." How? "Not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for-

ever." "And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." (Verse 25.)

How is a man begotten? Paul says, "Through the gospel;" James says, "With the word of truth;" Peter says, "By the word of God." And so I pass that question as settled to all that believe God's word and know that these passages are correctly quoted.

But, in addition to that, a man is dead in trespasses and in sin, and before he will ever pass to the golden glories of the by and by he must be quickened into a new and holy and higher life.

Without making the matter long, I simply call your attention to Ps. 119: 50, in which David said: "This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me." Then in verse 93 he says: "I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me."

But not only must a man be begotten and be quickened, but the Bible says in Heb. 11: 6 that "without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

A question of vital importance, then, is: How do men and women get faith? Paul says in Rom. 10: 13-17: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

"Timothy, I charge you to preach the word, for it is that by which men are begotten; it is that by which men are quickened; it is that from which we get our faith." But, in addition to this, Peter said in Acts 15: 7: "Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should

hear the word of the gospel, and believe." Not only that, but man must have a pure heart: for said the Savior in Matt. 5: 8: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

You ask: "How is that accomplished?" In Acts 15: 9 Peter said that God "put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." That faith comes by the hearing of God's word. Not only so, but man must have a pure soul as well as a pure heart. Peter said (1 Pet. 1: 22): "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently."

Not only must the soul be thus made pure, but I suggest to you that the soul must be converted. I but speak that which you already grant. How is it done? When David marched out under the bending blue of heaven's vast expanse, he said (Ps. 19: 7): "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Timothy, "preach the word."

And that is not all. Every man that expects to walk the streets of that celestial city must be sanctified. How is it done? In John 17: 17 we have an account of the last prayer our Savior ever prayed before his arrest, in which he said to the Father: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." If you, as sinners, expect to be clean, Jesus has told how; for he said in John 15: 3: "Now ye are clean." How? "Through the word which I have spoken unto you."

In James 1: 21-25 God said: "Lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whosoever looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

This is not all. After man, by the word of God directed, has been begotten, has been quickened, faith engendered, and thus the steps all along the line continue, at last becoming a child of God, a newborn babe, God's law and heaven's order is that he shall grow and develop and unfold larger and larger unto the perfect man and stature that God intends. You ask: "What is the process?" Let me call your attention to 1 Pet. 2: 1: "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."

"Timothy, the young Christian will need food, he will need strength and support. Preach the word in season and out of season; continue to reprove, to rebuke and exhort; for, be it remembered, the time will come when men will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned into fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. Continue to preach the word, regardless of the ways of men."

But, my friends, we are on the journey toward the pilgrims' home above. God knows that humanity needs a guide and a light along the path by which their weary footsteps may be safely directed to reach the goal intended in the divine plan. David said (Ps. 119: 105): "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Back in the country from whence I came they used to go to meeting at early candle light, and brethren and citizens in general carried their old lanterns. After the services were over, I have seen them go out the front door, strike a match and light up; and as they held the lantern up to view, because it did not throw the light all the way home at a single flash, they did not throw it to the ground and despise it. They understood how that was. Each one said: "I will light it; and as I start across the hollow and over the hill and through the skirt of woods yonder, if I will but hold on to the lantern, it will by and by show me

every pitfall along the way, every gully, every stump, every rut in which I might fall. If I will but do that, at last I will have reached my humble home ready to pillow my head for the slumbers of the night."

Will you not, with that illustration, get an insight into God's word? When I become a child of God and rise to walk in newness of life, God's word does not picture all the pathway before me. There are many tempestuous scenes through which I must go that are not then portrayed; but I rejoice to know that if I will take God's word in my hand, and, as I start to march down the darkened aisles of time, if I will but hold fast thereunto, it will guide my footsteps aright, keep me ever off the barriers and from falling over the precipices that are along life's way. May I climb the steps of life's ladder at last, cautioned and guided by God's word, until it fades away into the superior grandeur and luster and brilliancy of the perfect day in our Father's house above.

"Preach the word." It is that which is adequate to man's begetting. It is that by which he is quickened. It is that from which he gets his faith. It is that by which his heart is made pure. It is that by which he is sanctified. It is the food of the Christian.

But, finally, we all realize that life has its sorrows and its sighs, its tears and its joys, its sunshine and its shadows. I recognize that in every life some rain must fall, some days must be dark and dreary. Regardless of who we are, the burdens of life and the difficulties are certain to fall heavily along our pathway. And when troubles come, we are so constituted that we love comfort and consolation to sweeten the bitter experience by which we are made to taste the disappointments characteristic of the lives of men. It may be, perchance, that into some home a precious babe has been born, and for some reason or other it is snatched from its mother's bosom to blossom on the other shore. When it is torn away, friends may rise up to comfort her; husband and sisters, father and mother, may offer words of consolation; but all these words are inadequate to the demands of the mother's heart. Then what? She can turn to the book of God divine and hear our Savior say in Matt.

19: 14, for instance: "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." And with that glad announcement and splendid promise, like a halo of light flashed across life's pathway, hope springs eternal in the human heart.

It may be, my friends, that an older one, a companion, a father or mother, falls by the wayside. We carry their remains out to the silent city of the dead, and tears unbidden flow down our cheeks because of the grief and sorrow we feel. Friends try to comfort, but they largely fail. But God's word says: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." Such splendid promises enable us to walk out to the silent city and there deposit the beloved form of one that is nearest and dearest and still realize that behind the darkened cloud the sunlight of God forever shines. It is because of such that we can bury a father, a mother, a brother, or a sister, and erect the sacred mound. God's word is the source of the sweetest joys that earth can give and a foretaste of the bliss that lies beyond.

I want again to-night to commend that splendid message and that word of truth divine to this audience. I wish that I had the ability to impress upon you the necessity of respecting, in a practical way, the word of God Almighty. You ought to be in humble subjection to God's authority, to Heaven's will, to say with all your heart, "I believe it;" earnestly declare that from your sins you will turn away; have the courage to march down the aisles and extend your hand and publicly confess your faith in the crucified One; be buried in the name of the sacred Three, and then rise to walk in newness of life; and walk in it, my friends, until by and by God's finger will touch you and angels will gather and encamp around you to bear your spirit home to glory, to nestle in the bosom of God's love, while eternity rolls its endless ages on.

If there are any here to-night who have that disposition to render obedience to the gospel call, it is a pleasure once more and evermore to grant that privilege. Now, while we stand and sing, won't you come?

FEDERALISTS AND ANTIFEDERALISTS.

I express to you, ladies and gentlemen, the gratitude of my heart for such a splendid audience thus assembled. I regret that all cannot be seated, and appreciate the fact that you have a disposition to stand while I speak. I trust that the service may be so pleasant and so interesting as to pass the time away very rapidly. I shall not censure you, however, in case any of you become somewhat tired.

In the announcement of the theme for to-night—viz., "Federalists and Antifederalists"—I would not have you think I am transcending propriety in one who proposes to preach the gospel and launch out upon fields of governmental discussion, but because of the fact that I think in these two terms and the principles for which they stand there is a matter involved that may help us in our bearing and attitude toward the word of God. I have tried during the entire week to give a connected series of talks with one point in view, and that is, to get into the minds of those who have so kindly attended the absolute and all-sufficiency of the word of God and to take that as our standard by which we are to be governed in our journey across the pathway of time.

In the year 1774, when patience could no longer withstand the tyrannical hand that was bearing down upon the American colonists, they began to devise ways and means to rid themselves of the yoke of oppression that was upon them. Right soon thereafter they set forth a declaration over in North Carolina in which the first announcement was made that finally burst forth throughout the realm of the colonies and culminated in that wonderful document known as the Declaration of Independence.

After that we entered into the mighty conflict with the mother country, and, as a result of several years' fighting, in 1781, at old Yorktown, freedom from the yoke of England was gained. It had, indeed, been bought at a won-

derful price. The entire land was seemingly drenched and baptized in the precious blood of our sires.

Two years more rolled on until the Treaty of Peace was formally fixed and signed, and after that, upon their own responsibilities, these colonies set out to direct their own course of action. They had a system known as the Articles of Confederation, which was lacking in that it had no executive department of government. They could make whatsoever laws they wished and could pass upon their violation, but there was no power behind the throne to carry into effect the executive part thereof, and hence failure was the result.

In the year 1787 the people sent their respective delegates to a general convention, the object of which was to revise the Articles of Confederation and make them adequate to the demands of the colonies in general. After quite a deal of discussion, as is told in history, some very wise character made this splendid suggestion: that since these articles cannot be made adequate to our needs, let's wipe out the whole thing, clean the slate, and, commencing at the foundation, let us adopt a Constitution for the United States of America.

Four months were spent in discussion, investigation, and deliberation. Naturally there were many different sentiments regarding the Constitution, but they gradually narrowed down until there were just two contending forces, arguing back and forth.

One idea of government was championed by Alexander Hamilton, and the other by Thomas Jefferson. The difference was after this fashion: Mr. Hamilton's conception was that the States should sacrifice their powers and form a strong federal government. Mr. Jefferson said: "We have just fought, bled, and died in order to get rid of a monarchial form of government. Let the States retain their powers. Let the doctrine of States' rights prevail, not yielding too much to the central government and not giving too much authority to the machinery at our capital city."

These two ideas having been thoroughly discussed and

various compromises suggested, finally, on the seventeenth day of September of that year, the Constitution was adopted. Then they started out to elect a President, a chief executive of the nation. It was unanimously conceded that Washington should be the President. John Adams was elected the Vice President. Every one regarded the Constitution as the supreme law of the land. As soon as Mr. Washington was inaugurated, in 1789, he looked around to select the cabinet members, which at that time were four in number. Political enmity and party spirit had not yet developed into the intensity of modern times. At the head of the Treasury Department, Washington selected Alexander Hamilton, who was a Federalist of the deepest dye. As Secretary of Foreign Affairs, now called Secretary of State, he appointed Thomas Jefferson. So these two gigantic minds occupied prominent places. Mr. Henry Knox was made Secretary of War, and Mr. Edmund Randolph was made Attorney-General.

Thus the great ship of state was launched out upon the mighty sea before it. Soon after the machinery had been set in motion it was understood and generally known that the country was deeply and woefully in debt. Alexander Hamilton had a master mind along that line. He secured the passage in Congress of a bill assuming all the State debts and all the debts incurred by the war. It was his chief ambition to start the nation solvent and paying its way. He devised ways and means in harmony with the Constitution. He put a tariff (and this was the beginning of that much-discussed question) on foreign articles, on spirituous liquors, and things of that sort. By and by streams of revenue began to flow into the treasury; and, as Daniel Webster so eloquently said of him in later years: "He struck the rock of internal resources, and abundant streams of revenue gushed forth; he touched the dead corpse of public credit, and it sprang to its feet." Thus the government was launched under the flag and under the policy of "Pay your debts and assume your obligations."

Just after that step had been taken there was another matter that was by him proposed, and that was that the

government go into the banking business. Hamilton insisted that the government establish a national bank, in which it should be the chief stockholder.

Just at that point Thomas Jefferson, the Secretary of State, interposed objections, and the first great fight in the new government began, with these two champions on either side.

Now, I want you to get the arguments put forth by these great leaders. "Upon what ground, Mr. Jefferson, do you object to a national bank and to the government's going into the banking business?" Well, it is plain and easy, as every schoolboy knows. Jefferson said that the Constitution is the supreme law of the land; and while, indeed, it is not an infallible document, as is admitted by provision being made for its amendment, yet if we launch our ship of state on the Constitution we have adopted, we cannot establish a national bank, because there is no provision for it.

On the other hand, Mr. Hamilton said: "There is nothing in the Constitution prohibiting the establishment of a national bank. The Constitution says not a single word about a national bank. There is not a line in it that says: 'Thou shalt not have the government engage in the banking business.'"

These two ideas laid the foundation for the two great political parties, which were known as the Federalists and Antifederalists. But as time went on, other names characterized these parties. Mr. Hamilton's party came to be known as "loose constructionists"—that is, to construe loosely the Constitution, on the ground that we are at liberty to do anything that it does not specifically prohibit. Jefferson's party was known as "strict constructionists"—that is, they proposed to be governed strictly by what "was written," and declared there was danger in "going beyond."

In the heated discussions that grew out of these great differences the question became: "Shall we be governed by what the Constitution and the law of the land says, or shall we be at liberty to provide any measure, inaugurate any system, or engage in any kind of business, just so the Constitution does not specifically forbid it?"

At first Mr. Hamilton's idea prevailed; and when they came to the naming of the second President, John Adams, a Federalist, was elected. But Mr. Jefferson continued to preach the doctrine of respect for the Constitution and to hammer it into the people that we would not be correctly guided unless we regarded the supreme law of the land, unless we gave respect to our great Magna Charta, our Constitution. So when the election for the third President rolled around, Jefferson, an Antifederalist, was elected.

But I have made a political speech now long enough. I want to pass from that to this: I think, my friends, what I have said is an honest, fair, unbiased, and unprejudiced discussion of a difference that exists to-night between many of us with respect to the word of God. Jesus, the Christ, has legislated and announced to the world a great constitution—God's word—and has given it unto mortal man. It, unlike the Constitution adopted by our fathers, is not subject to amendment. It, unlike the one by them accepted, is an infallible constitution—one that needs no general assembly, no convention, no conferences, no delegation of people to add thereunto or to say imperfection characterizes it. I believe this gets at the very vitals and gist of the matter, and that all of our differences have sprung from the attitudes we have assumed to God's constitution.

Friends, what shall be my conception of the word of God Almighty? Do I look upon it as a law granting me the liberty to do anything not specifically forbidden therein? Or, on the other hand, have I accepted God's constitution and do I propose to be governed by what it says rather than by what it does not say? We have drifted into this kind of an idea, and it has generally come into popularity—namely, that the Bible is a book of broad, general principles that in the main ought to be respected just as a kind of general proposition and guide. But with reference to details—with reference to the establishment of the "banking business," or the organization of any kind of a society or corporation not specifically forbidden—we are at liberty to be guided by our "sanctified common sense."

Well, it is just a question as to how we shall construe

God's book and heaven's constitution. How do I view the Bible? Does God want me to be a "loose constructionist," or does God want me to be a "strict constructionist?" That will settle, ladies and gentlemen, all of our petty and minor discussions. It was not a question with Hamilton and Jefferson as to whether there was anything wrong in a national bank or the establishment thereof. I presume Mr. Jefferson would have said there was no harm in it. That was not the issue. But the question was: Are we going to respect the Constitution or not? That was, and is, the issue. And all down the line of our political history, instead of our statesmen and politicians discussing the vital principles of government upon which rest the hopes of our republic, they have too often just skimmed the surface, without a thought of the principles back of it.

Just so in matters of religion. We have wandered away on far-off discussions of petty differences. What is the principle? Go back of all these, and it resolves itself in this: "Shall I construe God's word strictly, shall I be governed by what God says, or shall I be privileged to do anything under heaven just so God, in so many words, does not declare: 'Hardeman, thou shalt not?' "

I wonder, in passing down the years of time, how God dealt with humanity under the patriarchal dispensation. The first pair born on the earth was commanded of God to offer an animal sacrifice unto the Lord—a bloody sacrifice. That was God's command as given in Gen. 4 and referred to in Heb. 11: 4. Abel, by faith (and faith comes by hearing God's word), brought unto God a sacrifice—one of the flock—and offered it unto Jehovah. Likewise, Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground. Unto the former God had respect, but unto the latter God had not respect. On what principle? Is there anything wrong in offering a sheaf of oats or wheat unto God? O, no! Well, what is wrong? Had God ever said: "Thou shalt not offer the fruit of the ground?" O, no! Well, what is wrong? Just this: It is the question back of it all: Which are we going to do? Are we going to do what God says and walk by faith, or do what seems good unto men and walk by sight?

When God told Noah to build the ark three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high, with a window and a door; to pitch the same inside and outside with pitch; to make it with first, second, and third stories, he meant that the ark should be made exactly that way. These were not general directions, but definite and exact specifications, and were so understood. "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he." (Gen. 6: 22.)

But, overlooking numbers of illustrations, I pass rapidly to the time when God, by the hand of Moses, led that host of people out of Egypt and brought them to the foot of Mount Sinai. It was there that God gave unto them a constitution, a decalogue, a principle of government that was to last the next fifteen hundred years. And at the very beginning thereof he said: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it." A frowning sentinel was placed on guard to uphold and maintain respect for God's word.

Well, there were Federalists and Antifederalists in Moses' day. It was not long until Nadab and Abihu took each his censer and offered strange fire unto God, which he had not ordained. They construed the constitution after this fashion—viz.: "Our hearts are right; we have the spirit of worship, and we want to worship the Lord; and we see no harm in what we have done." But God sent out a fire, and they died as a warning to others that God's constitution and heaven's order must be respected.

When God told Saul to go down and utterly destroy the Amalekites, to kill men and women, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass, Saul acted on the general broad-gauged idea, and thought surely he had interpreted and construed the constitution rightly, and that certainly if he obeyed the spirit of the command, all would be well. But God placed his condemnation upon the king because of the fact that he did not respect in the absolute the command of his word.

Even Moses, unto whom God said in the wilderness of Zin, "Speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall

give forth his water," called unto the people and said: "Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?" And he smote it, thus violating God's decree, doing that which had not been ordained; and, as a result, this grand old man of one hundred and twenty summers was never privileged to enter into the land that flowed with milk and honey. God at last took Moses to Mount Nebo's height and from its summit permitted him to take a view of the promised land. I have often tried to think of the splendor and grandeur of that attractive scene. I doubt not but that he could see far to the north the hoary heights of old Hermon, on which the Savior was transfigured. He could look beyond the river Jordan westward and see the smiling plains, the beautiful valleys, and the silvery streams. But Moses' work was ended and his crossing of the Jordan denied because of the fact that he had disobeyed God's voice and God's word. Jehovah dug his grave, and there buried Moses, with none, save perhaps an angel, to drop a tear of sorrow and of grief upon the sacred mound.

Not only that, but I recall the fact that a man on the Sabbath day started out to pick up sticks—quite an unusual thing for a *man* to do; but he reasoned about it and said: "I have no disposition to disobey God, and there is no harm in picking up sticks." And if I had been there, my friends, I would have said: "My dear sir, I see no harm in picking up sticks on the Sabbath day." But we must remember God's law. Because this man simply undertook to pick up sticks on the Sabbath day God Almighty had him put in prison that night and commanded the people to lay aside their robes and stone him to death. Why? Because he had not respected Heaven's constitution. Well, does God's law state that you must not pick up sticks? O, no! And I presume that he could have taken Moses' own law and asked him to show where God said, "Thou shalt not pick up sticks," and Moses could not have shown it, because it was not there, which is evidence of the fact, ladies and gentlemen, that we are to be governed by what he says and not privileged to do that which he does not say. "You

shall not, as heretofore," said Moses, "do every man that which is right in his own eyes."

But I come down to the New Testament just a moment. In Heb. 2: 1-3 Paul said: "We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" I think the principle of our lesson is shown clearly in the temptation of the Savior and in his escape and victory. When the devil came and said, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread," I want to ask you, what is wrong in the suggestion therein made? Sometimes I have heard preachers say that the wrong would have been in listening to the voice of the devil. I think that is not true; for if the devil can make a good suggestion, I want it, and it is not wrong just simply because he said it. "Lord, are you hungry?" "Indeed so." "Are the pangs of hunger gnawing at the very vitals of your being?" "Yes, sir." "Do you see anything wrong in bread?" "O, no!" "Has God ever said: 'Thou shalt not turn stones into bread?'" "No." "Will you not soon convert water into wine?" "Yes, sir." "Well, didn't you have bread back in your home?" "Yes, sir." "Has God ever prohibited it?" "No, sir." Then, my friends, the devil made the argument and asked: "Why not do it?" God does not prohibit it. Mark you, if there is no harm in it, if you like it and it strikes your fancy, then what? Are you at liberty to do it just because God has not specifically forbidden it?

Christ lays down the principle. He says: "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." That is to say this: "I am not my own. Not my will, but thine, be done. I am in the custody, under the guidance, of God Almighty; and if God wants stones turned to bread, he will say so; and when he so announces, that will be time enough. In the absence, therefore, of such commands and of such authority, I still endure the pangs of hunger, because I propose to

be governed by what God's word says rather than by my own personal preference and peculiar fancy."

I submit to you, ladies and gentlemen, this fact: that back under the Mosaic reign the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night was the sole guide. If the cloud moved, the people likewise moved; but when the cloud stood for two days or two weeks or two months, the host of Israel broke not their camp. They were governed by what the cloud did. Where it moved, they moved; and where it stood, they stood.

God's word is the guide and the cloud unto the people of to-day. It is time enough, my brethren, when he says do a thing for us to act. "Where it speaks, we speak; where it is silent, we are silent."

Let us not, therefore, be wise above that which is written. Possibly this will help us to understand 2 John 1: 9, which says: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine [or teaching] of Christ, hath not God." God forbid that I should be led by my own lusts, my own appetites, and my own pleasures to transgress, or go beyond, the authority of the book of God.

My obligation, therefore, toward the Bible is the obligation that Mr. Jefferson felt toward the Constitution—viz., it is the supreme law of the land; I must do what the Constitution says, and not presume to go beyond it. The only safe course in life for you and for me is this—viz., take God at his word, believe what he says, become and be just what God requires; and then, his word still our guide, let us live as he directs, worship according to his decree, and practice those things, and those only, for which there is authority in his word. If we do so, I feel certain that when the storms of life are all over, when we shuffle off this mortality, we will be privileged to march home to glory, into the paradise of God for evermore.

I want, therefore, before this magnificent audience to say this: I do not claim infallibility. I am not so set in my own ways that I could not be changed; and if any man, I care not from whence he comes, will point out to me, or to my brethren, for whom I think I can speak, anything com-

manded by God, authorized by the Scriptures, that we do not preach and practice, I pledge you, to the very best that lieth within me, we will introduce it just as early as it is possible for us to do so. On the other hand, if there is one single thing preached or practiced by that brotherhood with whom I stand identified to-night that is not authorized by the word of God, I stand individually pledged to give up that thing before the morrow's sun shall rise. Why? Because I expect to meet God in the by and by. I do not want to be responsible for sowing seeds of discord or division outside of that which God commanded. And I do hope, my brethren, from the depth of my being, that our conception of the word of God and attitude toward it may be such that all lines may move in convergent ways, and that the time is not far distant until a once happy, honest, earnest brotherhood throughout the length and breadth of this land can clasp hands again on the old Book and earnestly contend once for all for the faith that was delivered unto us. I also hope we will not be ashamed to stand up before dying men and tell the story of the cross, regardless of opinions contrary; that we will preach the gospel straight from the shoulder, unswerving, uncompromising, unyielding, because if there are any people under heaven to-night that have right and reason to rejoice, I think I stand with that company. We have no creed, no discipline, no confession of faith, no church manual, no ritual, except the Bible, the book of God divine. We have no leader, no head, except the immaculate Child of Mary. We claim to be nothing under the shining realm except Christians—Christians only. We stand pledged to the idea of speaking where the Bible speaks and keeping silent where God's book is silent. This gives the only possible basis for Christian unity, and for its accomplishment, under the blood-stained banner of Prince Immanuel, our earnest prayers are constantly ascending toward the throne of God.

I ask, in conclusion, to-night, if there are those in this splendid company, who have given such fine attention and

have evidenced such splendid interest, that want to become Christians, and only that. I want you to join no organization, no body, no party unknown to the book of God. I want you to wear no name other than the name "Christian." I want you to accept no creed other than the Bible, which is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. It is my good pleasure once more to extend to you the gospel call.

CONVERSION

The subject I want to discuss to-night has been announced already, and it is the simple theme of conversion; and as I enter upon the investigation of it, I am sure I have the assistance in thought of this entire audience.

As a text, I call your attention to Acts 3: 19, in which Peter said, concluding the sermon in the temple: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted [or turn again], that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

I need not tell you that Peter had gone up to the temple, prompted perhaps by a natural desire to tell the story, and also in obedience to Heaven's command to go into all the world. The very fact that he had wrought a miracle upon a lame man above forty years of age had increased the interest and doubtless gave him a better attention, a more riveted attention, than otherwise he might have had; and, concluding the wonderful discourse in which the primary facts of the gospel were emphasized, Peter said: "Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

This verse, if there were no others in the Bible, emphasizes the necessity of conversion. Why repent? Why turn again? Note the necessity, the objective, and the reason—that your sins may be blotted out. It emphasizes, in this connection, that man is a sinful creature. It carries in the very announcement that he is condemned and unfitted to stand approved at the last great day. Therefore, with the conversion, this condition may be overcome; you may be rid of that which subjects you to wreck and ruin. Here is the suggestion: "Repent and turn away, that your sins may be blotted out." The blotting out of our sins is preparatory to the chief aim—the attainment of the eternal happiness of man.

Another scripture emphasizes the necessity of conversion.

It is in Matt. 18: 1-3, where the disciples came to the Savior and said: "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Now, I think it would be hard to frame in any language a law more emphatic, more forcible, more prohibitive in its possibilities, than that which is therein said: "Except a man repent, and be converted, and become as a little child, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven."

Now, if God says you cannot, I have never been able to figure out how you can. Of course, if I had said this, I would try to devise some way to set it aside; but God just puts it in a plain, simple, positive way and declares: "Except a man be converted, and become as a little child, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." Let no man, therefore, deceive himself by thinking that in some mysterious manner as yet unknown to him God will take him home to glory regardless of his being converted. That will not happen, because God said it must be otherwise. You must be converted and become as a little child. It does not look very consistent with the Savior's declaration, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven," that said child is conceived in sin, with a heart as black as midnight. Such is not characteristic of a little child. When Jesus made this comparison, he could not find a purer, holier, more spotless character; so he said to his disciples: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Now, it makes no difference how much money we may have, it makes no difference how much learning may be ours, it does not matter what political office we may hold, we must be converted. God is no respecter of persons, classes, or castes of humanity. He simply puts the emphatic negation that absolutely no man can be saved except he be converted unto the gospel of the Son of God.

I have not attempted to address you upon any theme about which there are more differences than this one I have

for study to-night. A very popular theory in many parts of the land and country is that conversion is wholly an act of God Almighty, that it is purely the Maker's transaction, and some scriptures are used in that connection as demonstrative of that idea. For instance, I have heard John 3: 8 explained by suggesting that conversion is like the wind that "bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." You just know it happened, but don't know how or anything about it.

Well, there are others. I will have more to say on that as the meeting progresses; but suffice it to say now that if conversion were altogether a work of God, reducing man to nothing more than a mere machine, acted upon, with nothing to do concerning this, no will power, no effort of his own; if conversion be purely an act of Jehovah on man, and if God is no respecter of persons, he is under obligation to convert every man and woman on the face of the earth. Nothing would be consistent with the characteristics of Jehovah except universal salvation. To illustrate: If God Almighty, independent of a man's will and not consulting his intelligence and power, comes in a mysterious way and converts one man, why should he pass another up and not likewise convert him? "But man has nothing to do with it." "O, no!" Then, why did he take the one and refuse the other, since he is no respecter of persons? Ladies and gentlemen, that thought does not stand up in the light of common reasoning or ordinary consistency.

On the other hand, we are disposed to swing like a pendulum from one extreme to another. There may be such conception as this abroad in some other quarters: that God has nothing to do with it at all, that it is altogether man's work—wholly in his own hands. Why, friends, this is just as foreign to the truth as was the former. Such would be dishonoring to God and would be refusing to admit the power and efficacy that rest alone in him with reference to the cleansing of the souls of men.

But, as in general, the truth lies betwixt the two—namely,

in conversion, God has his hand in it all; likewise man has a part; and as Paul said, in 1 Cor. 3: 9, in this matter of salvation, "We are laborers together with God." There is nothing in a conversion unless it was begun, carried out, executed, and consummated as a result of God Almighty having a hand therein.

On the other hand, there has never been a genuine conversion unless man had a part in it. In John 3: 16, all three of the parties concerned in the case of conversion are represented. Now watch: "For God so loved the world [that is God's part], that he gave his only begotten Son [hence the Son has a part], that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life [that is man's part in it]."

But in another passage (Eph. 2: 8, 9), wherein the two elements are brought to view—God's side, the divine side, and the human side—Paul said: "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Salvation is the thought proclaimed. God had a part in perfecting, in revealing, in making it known; and hence it was prompted purely by his love, his mercy, and his grace; but man, standing as he was at the foot of the cross, must accept God's terms; and hence, on man's part, it is a matter of faith. It is by the grace of God and by the faith of man, and thus you have the principles of salvation in which both heaven and earth are equally interested and likewise have a part.

But let me suggest to you this thought in order that discouragement may never be ours. In the days of the Savior, and likewise in the days of the apostles, there were people who absolutely refused to be converted, for the Savior said in Matt. 13: 15: "This people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

They refused when the matchless Son of God himself preached unto men and women by the thousands wherever

audiences could be had, and beckoned unto the people time and again, and said unto them as he did to Jerusalem (Matt. 23: 37): "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" And unto the Jews he said (John 5: 40): "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."

My friends, if it should come to pass that at the last great day you and I should be turned away from the beautiful gate into the blackness of despair and the darkness that awaits, it will not be by virtue of the fact that God would not accept us, but because of the fact that we would not respond unto Heaven's call—that we would not turn and be converted, that God might blot out our sins and initiate us into the family of the First-born.

Now, with these statements, I call your attention to the next thought. The confusion, as it occurs to me, that exists in the world to-night is due to a failure to analyze the process by which such is to be brought about. There are three things characteristic of man that the subject of conversion contemplates.

First, I need to have my heart converted unto God. I tried to tell you yesterday afternoon just what the Bible had to say regarding that. That part of my nature that thinks, that reasons, that understands, that believes—I need to have that converted so that instead of thinking in the wrong direction, instead of believing the wrong thing, instead of reasoning about the lustful affairs of the earth—I need that converted to believe in the Lord, to reason correctly with God in the right philosophy of life; and hence that part of my heart needs to be converted.

But my will power likewise needs to be changed from the downward way, with my purposes, plans, designs, and schemes turned about and faced toward the higher and nobler, better and grander things of the earth. I need my affection, love, desire, confidence, trust—all of them changed and centered upon the right ideal and the proper conception of life and duty.

In addition to the change of heart, I must have my life, in its purpose, in its plan, in its intentions, in its tasks, also changed. I must abandon my former career whereinsoever wrong and reverse the matter and let such a change result in a reformation of life.

In addition to that, I must have my state or relationship or attitude unto the government of God changed and be naturalized or adopted into God's family. I think, with these suggestions, you can appreciate better the facts of the gospel as well as the commandments thereof.

Suppose to-night, as a matter of illustration, that a citizen of a foreign country has learned of the beauties, advantages, and opportunities of our splendid land of America; that after having learned of such, after having gained by testimony, convicting and convincing, evidence of the superiority thereof, he decides and purposes in his heart to become an American citizen. The very fact that his resolution is formed, that his purpose is planned and centered—that does not of itself make him a citizen of the American country; but, in addition to that, he must renounce his allegiance unto the country in which he was and submit unto the law of naturalization; and not until the entire process is consummated has he the right to claim the protection of the "Stars and Stripes" and have "Old Glory" wave over him in defiance of all opposition.

Another illustration. A young woman thinks of one day being married to a young man. What is the first process therein? It is first a change of affections from former surroundings and centering them upon him whose wife she expects to be. And when she has thus learned to love and believe him and put her trust and confidence in him, that does not mean she is his wife. There is another step. She must form a resolution to turn her back upon home, upon father and mother if need be. She will forsake the palatial residence and go with him to live in a log cabin if the circumstances demand such. That is her purpose and intention; and when she thus resolves to turn, she is not married; and were the young man to die, she would not be a beneficiary in his estate. Then, if she has that love, that faith,

that trust, that confidence, and that determination to forsake all others, what next? There is one thing that must be said before the great State of Tennessee will recognize the marriage, and that is, there must be a ceremony by proper authorities; and until that, let come whatsoever may, there is no marriage, no wife, no beneficiary in the estate of the intended husband and no right to wear his name.

Now, all of us understand that. We are a unit with respect thereunto. Did you know that in the Bible, under the figure of marriage, the idea of conversion is presented? Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom, came to earth and courted and wooed and sought the love, the confidence, the trust, and the esteem of lost and ruined humanity. Having appealed to them in the tenderest strains, he persuaded many of the sons and daughters of men to center their affections upon him. But that does not mean marriage to Christ yet. That is simply the first step, the first process. Then these same characters decide to abandon all else, to turn their backs upon the world. But the mere fact that they so decide does not make them children of God or the bride of Christ. After this, prompted by love, affection, trust, and confidence, God says you must march out under the bending blue, where orange blossoms indeed kiss the brow of beauty, and let the ceremony contained in the great commission (Matt. 28: 19) be said that changes your state or relationship and makes you a beneficiary of his will and gives you a right to wear his name. If the marriage relationship pictured in the Bible is not like the one thus described, then it is a misfit, and it is an illustration that fails to illustrate.

I need not tell you that in the gospel plan of salvation there are three things that correspond to those parts. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is that by which a man's heart is converted to-night. Repentance is that by which a man's life is changed; and, short of repentance, no salvation, no conversion. Short of the fact that a man's faith leads him to change his life, there is no hope for him. Just as, therefore, faith comes to purify and change the heart, as repentance comes to purify and change the life, there is a mar-

riage ceremony, given just one time in the Bible, in the name—not of Tennessee, though great is our State; nor in the name of Solomon, David, Abraham, Moses, John the Baptist, Paul, or Peter; but in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—to change the state. When that ceremony is completed, then, indeed, is one a beneficiary of His estate. Then the man has a change, not only of heart, but of life and of relationship, and has a right to claim a part of heaven's inheritance and the right to take upon himself the name of Him whose he has become; and if he will thereafter live as a faithful, consecrated wife ought to, at last, when heaven's home is adorned and all things made ready, Christ will come to touch his bride and bid her come home to joys and bliss eternal.

But there are different kinds of conversions. That word does not carry with it any special way or direction in which the matter is to be done. No man was ever converted to one thing but that at the same time he was compelled to turn from the other. I cannot go toward this side of the auditorium but that I turn from that side, and vice versa; and hence, if it were not for the fact that man had gone away from God, there would be no need of talking about a man's being converted back to God. If man had never turned in the wrong direction, there would be no occasion for suggesting that he turn and face about in the opposite direction.

I call your attention to the first pair in God's paradise of the long ago, as Grandfather Adam and Grandmother Eve stood in their innocent state and guiltless condition on the plane of justification. They were fit company for divine association, and with them God loved to mix and mingle. Now, as a matter of fact, all of us are aware that in the course of time they became subjected unto death and to consequences that took them out of the paradise of God, with the door barred behind them. They were made to grope their way down the darkened aisles of time, and, so far as they knew, without one ray of hope even in the distant future to shine upon them or to give them encouragement.

Now, what were the steps taken in man's fall? In man's

conversion from God, just what happened? Well, first of all, I suggest to you that there appeared a preacher on the scene; and, therefore, you can eliminate from your mind the idea that he was converted from God by direct process. That was not the fact in the case. But the first thing that happened in man's downward course was that a preacher, "galvanized into respectability," appeared upon the scene in the form of a serpent—the devil, if you please—there in the garden of Eden, with the grandmother of mankind. What was the first thing that was done? As a matter of fact, that character commenced to preach unto her a doctrine and proclaim a message unto that woman that by and by allured her, caught her ear, and gained her attention. But what did he preach? If you will allow me to say it as it is, he preached unto her a lie. But be it remembered that a lie preached and believed has exactly the same effect upon one's feelings as if it were the truth. He merely said unto her: "In the day that you eat of the fruit of a certain tree you shall not die. God has said that you shall, but that is not so; you shall not." Well, all right. Now what? The next step was, very unfortunately, that Grandmother Eve believed what the preacher said, and thus yielded assent and recognition unto the truthfulness thereof.

But the very minute that she believed that statement God did not damn her. He did not drive her out of his presence upon the doctrine of faith, and faith only. But what then? In addition to her having believed a lie, then what? The Bible says that she put forth her hand and ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and gave also unto her husband, and he did eat; and as she (1) heard, (2) believed, and (3) obeyed, she became guilty in God's sight and was disinherited and driven out; and that is the process. Watch that just here with these steps. Step No. 1, she believed a lie; step No. 2, she obeyed a lie; step No. 3, she became guilty; step No. 4, God drove her out and closed the gates of paradise behind her and put the flaming sword there as a signal and a guard, lest man should put forth his hand, eat of the tree of life, and live forever.

And now, as the result of disobedience, death universally

reigns upon all the posterity of that accursed pair; and, as Paul declared in Eph. 2: 12: "At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

And that is the condition, my friends, that prevails tonight with reference to every man that has put forth his hand and violated the commands of Almighty God. By virtue of our own sin, our own iniquity, we have separated between us and our God and he has hid his face from us. And it is said: "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins;" and: "Ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come." Hence, man must be converted—turn again, reverse the steps.

Starting now, as he does, not on the plane of justification, but on the plane of condemnation, what is the natural, the simple, and the reasonable manner? Just simply to retrace your steps. It is just as far back up the line as it was down. There are as many steps back to the plane from whence they came as there were down to condemnation, wreck, and ruin. But the process must be reversed; and, hence, commencing now just where Adam by transgression landed, and taking man as he is, meeting conditions and circumstances, not as they might be, but as they are, let us retrace our path, assured of the fact that man must be converted or there is no heaven for him.

Now what? God provides the scheme of salvation, and orders the apostles, prompted by love, to commence with man as he is and lead him back to the state or the plane from which he fell. What is the first step? Exactly like that one up yonder—*preach* or *teach*. Hence, the Savior said: "They shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

But what to preach? The devil commenced by preaching a lie. Let gospel preachers now begin by preaching the truth, for it is the truth that makes us free and that makes us to stand in the presence of God justified. But that is not all. Just as they back there believed the lie, just so

men now must take the first step and believe the truth. Hence, he is marching backward and upward toward the plane from which the first pair descended; and remember that the very minute that Grandmother Eve believed, she was not driven out of the garden. Upon what basis, then, do you think that the Lord commanded that the sinner retrace the steps, believing that God will open wide the gates and bid him step back into the garden of Eden? It took more than faith to damn him. It takes more than faith to save him—a faith perfected by obedience.

Therefore, in addition to man's believing the truth, God says: "Sir, I want you to obey the truth." Hence the second thought of the gospel plan of salvation. Take that. Then what? After you have believed the truth and obeyed it, God says: "I will pardon your sins. When the first pair believed and obeyed it, they became guilty. When we reverse the steps, believe and obey it, God Almighty pardons us.

The next step is, they became guilty in God's sight and were driven out. We accept the terms of salvation in the reverse, in the conversion, the turning again, and are adopted into the family of God, from which the first pair wandered in the long ago.

Ladies and gentlemen, mark you, a change of heart, or a conversion of heart, and pardon of sin do not have their origin in the same place. Repentance of all sin and the remission of sins occur in two different places. Change of heart takes place in the mind of man here upon earth; pardon takes place in the mind of God above, in heaven. Repentance and turning are acts of the individual; blotting out of sins, an act of God.

I doubt not that in the penitentiary of our State there are those that really have had a change of heart. They would give ten thousand worlds, they honestly think to-night, for another opportunity of liberty. They have shed tears over their wretched state and mad act accomplished; they have bowed down in repentance. But that is not forgiveness out yonder eight or ten miles west of the city; pardon takes place up here on Capitol Hill, in the mind of an entirely

different person altogether, and there is no earthly way for that prisoner yonder to know by what takes place within himself what is in the mind of Governor Taylor. He cannot prove by the way he feels just how Governor Taylor is feeling on the proposition. There is repentance yonder, there must be change of heart, there must be submission; but on Capitol Hill is the place of forgiveness. And what evidence can that man that is pardoned have except by Governor Taylor communicating the information? And when the note or the runner is brought, it is a matter of faith in the Governor that he has really been pardoned. He passes into liberty and freedom, walking by faith.

Just so I believe the gospel here in Nashville to-night, I repent of my sins, I walk down into the water, and in the name of the sacred three I am buried like unto that of the Son of God, arising fully resolved to walk in newness of life. Then what? I have God's word for it that from the courts of glory, from the realms of bliss divine, he has pardoned my sins. Hence, I walk by faith, not by sight. I walk by faith, not by feeling, because my feelings are deceptive and God's word fails not. The heavens may pass away, the rocks may become a molten mass; but the word of God endureth forever and forever. The foundation of God, therefore, stands sure. And when thus I submit to heaven's terms and become converted to God, to Christ, I know as much as it is humanly possible that all my sins have been wiped out; and if I will but continue faithful, at last God will be pleased to lead me up the glittering strand and into the sunlight of his matchless presence.

I ask to-night, as in a moment we will stand and sing, are there those of you that will be converted? Do you believe the gospel with your whole heart? If so, I would not have you change that otherwise. Are you fully persuaded to reform your way of living and direct your life in harmony with the commands and the principles of the word of Jesus Christ? Will you submit to his terms? If so, there will be a complete conversion on your part and you will be able to read your title clear to mansions in the skies.

THE GREAT COMMISSION

It has already been announced from this platform, and also from the papers, that the subject for discussion tonight is "The Great Commission." In order that you may get the facts in your mind at the very outset, I want to quote to you just what the Bible has to say, and thus in just as simple a manner as I possibly can, I want to analyze the statements therein found, believing as I firmly do that you are properly prepared in heart and mind for this study.

In Matt. 28: 19, 20 there is this story: Jesus Christ, speaking unto the apostles, said: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

As reported in Mark 16: 15, 16, it is after this fashion: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

As given in Luke 24: 46, 47, it is as follows: "And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

Now, if you will hold these passages thoroughly in mind, I want to analyze with you honestly and thoughtfully and if possible to get not only the truth, but the whole truth as incorporated in these three accounts. But before I do that, I think that you may be better prepared to appreciate it by a little bit of a review of the things that preceded.

Religion is of divine origin, and let us remember that the first religion ever established on earth was purely of a family sort and type, there being just a few people back in the early morning of time. God Almighty saw fit to inaugurate

a system wherein the father of the family was ordained as a priest in the home; and wherever they chanced to go, he could stop and erect an altar where they could offer sacrifices, assured that it would meet with Heaven's approval.

Thus the matter continued down the line for twenty-five hundred years, until Jehovah saw fit to call his people out from bondage in Egypt and lead them by the hand of Moses across the Red Sea and bring them to the foot of Mount Sinai. While Moses and Joshua were on the summit thereof, God instituted a national religion. Instead of building an altar wherever man chanced to be, God suggested: "I will build for the people a tabernacle, a house of God, builded upon a silver foundation. I will record my name, and those of you that wish to worship Jehovah will have a certain place to which you may go."

That, ladies and gentlemen, was the inauguration of that system known as Judaism, that lasted from Mount Sinai down to bleeding Calvary, a period of fifteen hundred years.

In the year 1095 B.C. there was a kingdom established, gratifying very largely the desires of Israel. Saul became the first king. Forty years from that date David became king of Israel and reigned another forty years, followed by his son, Solomon, for still another forty years, at the expiration of which time—975 B.C.—very unfortunately, as we view it, the kingdom was divided. Ten tribes went down to Bethel, following the leadership of Jeroboam. The other two tribes—Judah and Benjamin—led by Rehoboam, remained faithful to God's order, worshiping at Jerusalem. The ten tribes, under a reign of nineteen kings, continued until B.C. 721, when they were swallowed up by the Assyrian nation, like unto whom, in their idolatrous ways, they had become.

But the two tribes lasted until the year 606 B.C., when the greatest battle of all history back there was fought, when old Nebuchadnezzar, of the east, king of Babylon, met Pharaoh-necho, then king of Egypt, at Carchemish, near the Euphrates, and there the battle raged as to which one of these two monarchs should sway the scepter of authority over mankind.

The victory was gained by the eastern king, after which he swept down upon Jerusalem in the reign of Jehoiakim and held them in subjection for nineteen years, at the close of which time, Zedekiah, the last of the house of David, rebelled. King Nebuchadnezzar had the old gentleman's eyes put out, desecrated the temple, and carried away the sacred vessels therein, together with the most of the people, into Babylon, to finish out a period of captivity of seventy years—fifty-one years longer than they had hitherto been in subjection. At that time the house or the tabernacle of David fell down and passed into ruins.

Time rolled on, and in the year 536, by the decree of old Cyrus, the Jews came back from Babylon and began rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem under the splendid leadership of Nehemiah. Another five hundred years go by, during which time the Jews are subject to various nations, when, in the providence of God, John the Baptist, forerunner of Christ, the one who was sent to bear witness of the true Light, appeared, announcing a message unto the people then living, calling their attention to their indulgences, to their selfish gratifications, begging them to repent and reform from such, for he declared that the kingdom of God was at hand. Soon after he was put in prison, our Lord himself, having been, if you please, acknowledged by the God of the universe, likewise took up the work laid down by John, and began to preach unto the people: "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He selected twelve and sent them out upon a mission that was restricted and narrowed in its application: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, nor into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Then he sent the seventy and likewise bade them to tell the people that God's kingdom was come nigh. All of this was but preparatory for the transition out of a national and into an international and world-wide religion.

When at last the Savior died on the cross, he blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was contrary and against them and took it out of the way. He tore down the

middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of the commandments contained in ordinances, that he might make thereby in himself of the twain—Jew and Gentile—one new man, so making peace, and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.

Having spent three days and nights in Joseph's new tomb, he burst the doors thereof on the third day and came forth triumphant over the powers of the Hadean world, disclosing his identity to those round about, until at the end of forty days he led his apostles out to the heights of Galilee and there announced unto them a system of religion that was not narrowed down to a family nor even limited by national ties, but that was world-wide, that was heaven-born, that had been bought by the precious blood of the Son of God himself. The twelve having been selected, he gave them the most sacred charge ever couched in human words or delivered to mortal man. The salvation of the souls of men is the objective toward which all things are bound and toward which everything is converging. The one supreme object to be accomplished is the remission of sins, the saving of men and women, and the increasing of the kingdom of God and his Son, Jesus Christ.

Hence, as is recorded by Matthew, he is declared to have said: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

There are some things in this commission, as a secondary matter, addressed unto them who at first obedience became members of his body, that do not properly come into the discussion to-night, and so I pass that by for the time being. I must suggest to you the fundamental things therein as I conceive to be applicable to an alien sinner. The first obligation that rests upon the church of God to-night and upon every Christian is that we are to go; and let me drop this

thought, that a body of religious people that is not missionary in heart, in sentiment, in theory, in practice, is not the body after the New Testament fashion.

But, in addition to that, Christ said: "Go ye therefore, and *teach.*" I submit to you, ladies and gentlemen, that the religion of the Bible is a taught religion; that the Christianity of the book called the "book of God" is a taught Christianity—that is, a thing men learn. Hence, Paul said to Timothy: "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them." Any system of religion, therefore, that is not based on elementary teaching is unlike the one mentioned and referred to in this connection. Man stands absolutely unable to direct his own steps. He is launched out upon the great ocean of time, unable by his own inherent powers to steer his bark safe to the harbor. God says, therefore: "I want you apostles, when the Holy Spirit shall have come upon you, to go and *teach;* for it is written, They shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me."

But I know quite well that you cannot teach very much unless you have somebody to whom the teaching is addressed, and the commission furnishes the answer unto that demand: "Go ye therefore, and teach *all nations.*" Go, teach all the races and the classes of humanity everywhere. But, Matthew, what do you want us to teach? And you know, my friends, that Matthew did not tell. He did not say whether to preach or teach Democracy or Republicanism, and for that reason I leave a blank here and pass on.

But Matthew did not suggest whether people ought to believe or disbelieve it—simply made no mention thereof; and so another blank. Neither did Matthew say one word on earth about whether people ought to turn toward him and repent of their sins; and so I leave a third blank, and pass to the next declaration, anxious to find out just what is said.

Note: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations." Then what? "*Baptizing* them in the name of the Father, and

of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Well, Matthew, what for? Why baptize them? Matthew did not tell, nor will I—just yet. Well, Matthew, where shall we begin—at Nashville, Knoxville, Chattanooga, or where? Matthew is as silent as the stars above regarding that specification.

The point I want to get before you is this: Just to have and to hold in your minds if possible the various items and stipulations by each of these characters mentioned, and at the close of the investigation I want to strike a line and make a summary of what each of the witnesses shall have to say. I think that is about the way our lawyers proceed in a suit pending. If they have some two or three witnesses, they call them in and have them duly sworn and then placed upon the witness stand. They make note of each point therein mentioned and each item to which they give evidence; and when this one is through, they bid him to stand aside and bring in No. 2; and then they bring up items of a like nature as we do in the schoolroom in compound numbers, until the entire list is finished, and at the close thereof the lawyer rises and says: "Gentlemen of the jury, here is the truth, the whole truth, as told by these witnesses." And upon that he makes his pleadings and expects a verdict according to the evidence and law presented.

Just so to-night may I have, if possible, Matthew, Mark, and Luke after the same fashion? Matthew declares they were to teach, and that all nations are to be subjects thereof. Not only so, but the taught were to be baptized. In what name? In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. But he did not declare for what purpose, he did not announce where it was to begin; and, furthermore, regarding the things applicable to a sinner this deponent saith not.

Well, will you help me to study that just a little further? It seems to me to be absolutely plain. I know that I know what it says. I know that you know without any question whatever. I presume there are thousands of people in this audience to-night that could quote what Matthew de-

clared. But we are a wonderful people in trying to explain things according to our peculiar fancy.

There are those that say: "Of course Matthew thus testified, but the baptism mentioned by him is not the baptism that is practiced in this country in a pool of water, or it is not water baptism at all, but that has reference to Holy Ghost baptism."

Well, maybe you might be mistaken about that. Perhaps there is some room for doubt, if not positive proof and genuine evidence to the contrary. I think I can say to you truly to-night that, while there are thousands of things I do not know, I believe there is one thing I do know—namely, that the baptism spoken of by Matthew in the commission is not a baptism of the Holy Spirit. Why do I thus speak so positively? First of all, it is the baptism that is rendered in the name of the Holy Spirit and by his authority; but I think that is not conclusive. I want to call your attention to the fact that the baptism mentioned in this commission was a baptism to be administered by man. The same apostles that were to do the going were likewise to do the teaching, and the same ones that God commanded to teach he likewise commanded to do the baptizing; and if I were in the schoolroom, I would just ask the boys and girls to designate the subjects of these words: "Go." Who? "Ye." Who, "ye?" "Ye apostles—go and teach." Who teach? "Ye apostles—and baptize." Who baptize? "Ye apostles." But you say: "That is perfectly true; but what has that to do with it?" My friends, it settles the question beyond a shadow of a doubt; for no man that ever did or ever will live ever administered Holy Ghost baptism. Since it is true that the baptism of the commission was to be administered by man, it follows, as the night follows the day, that it was not a baptism of the Holy Spirit; for, notwithstanding the fact that John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb, he says: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Since this baptism in the commission was

administered by man, it is evidence beyond a shadow of a doubt that it is not the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

But I have had people to suggest another thing to me, and I always appreciate the kindly suggestions of anybody, regardless of how much we might differ. As a matter of fact, I think it rather a reflection upon us that we cannot even differ in political, social, or religious matters without becoming offended. Some of the best friends I have do not believe as I do on certain questions, but I appreciate their honesty and sincerity. But here is the objection sometimes raised: "I have been told that baptism is a duty that belongs to Christian people and is not a duty obligatory upon the sinner." Well, I want to ask a question or two just here. Can you think, ladies and gentlemen, of a single, solitary Christian duty on earth that a man can perform just one time and get a clear receipt from future obligation? Is prayer a Christian duty? Certainly. Can I pray one time and settle up my account along that line? "O, no," somebody says; "that recurs." Well, is the Lord's Supper a Christian duty? "Yes." Do we do that just one time only? O, no. Is giving of my means a Christian duty? It is. Well, can I write a check for one hundred dollars or five hundred dollars, and do you think the Lord would give me a receipt in full of all accounts? I think not. If baptism is a Christian duty, therefore, you must acknowledge one fact—namely, that it stands in a class absolutely by itself, and there is not another single Christian duty under heaven that a man has to perform but one time. The truth is, it is applicable to an alien in becoming a child of God.

Now, will you let Matthew stand aside for a moment and let me present Mark in the witness chair for your study? "Mark, what have you to say about it?" He says: "Hardeman, my deposition has been taken, and you will find it upon the files of heaven's chancery; and as I said then, so say I now, and of what I then declared I bid you go and see."

Well, now, carefully and quietly let's study. Mark said that the Savior said unto the apostles: "Go ye into all the world." What did Matthew say? "And teach all nations."

Matthew said, "Teach;" but Mark said, "Preach;" but they mean one and the same thing. Any man that rises in your midst and expects your careful consideration and courtesy ought to be able to teach something; and if he can teach nothing, he possibly has answered the wrong call and responded to the wrong demand. "Go ye therefore, and preach." Matthew did not say what, but Mark says: "Preach the gospel unto every creature, wherever they chance to be found." That is why I am glad to-night that this section on the left is occupied by the colored race and the rest of the sections by others, for I have never found in God's book where the gospel is limited to any race, country, or clime.

Now, that much was obligatory upon the twelve.

After you shall have preached the gospel unto every creature, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." If that were anything else except a matter of religion, there never would be a single question as to the significance and meaning thereof. What did the Lord say? It is not what I might think it ought to be; it is not a question of what I would have him say or of what my great-great-grandmother might have thought regarding it. That is not the question. What did God say about it? "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

Now, to be just a little bit critical along that line, I call your attention to this statement. This is what we call in grammar a "complex declarative sentence," the principal statement of which is this: "He shall be saved." Now, what "he?" If the Lord had put no modifying thought therein, I would suggest just any "he," wherever you might find him, a universal salvation everywhere—"he shall be saved." But that is modified, if you please, by what we call a "limiting" or a "restrictive" clause, and it is a certain "he." Out of all the sons and daughters of men on earth, Jesus Christ picked out one class, accurately described, variously detailed, and made the declaration that "he shall be saved." What "he?" The "he" that believeth and is baptized.

"Lord, did you say, 'He that believeth shall be saved?' "

"No." "Did you say, 'He that is baptized shall be saved?'" "No." "Well, what did you say?" "I said, 'He that believeth and is baptized.' That is the man that shall be saved."

Now, Christ was not talking about an innocent babe. He had not in mind an irresponsible idiot. He did not include in that an untaught heathen. He had in mind a man that was accountable unto God, a man that heard the truth, a man that could understand and appreciate the truth, and announced the terms of salvation unto the man in the language that is mentioned. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

There are two thoughts equally joined, coördinately so, joined together as a supplement the one to the other, indicative of additional ideas. Let me make to you this statement: that whenever and wherever salvation is promised unto man on certain named conditions, while there may be more conditions implied, there can never be less than those stipulated. Jesus Christ bound together faith in the Son of God and baptism in his name. I did not write that, none of my brethren, nor any general assembly or legislative body on the face of the earth. That declaration came from the Son of God divine, and I must meet it at the everlasting judgment.

Sometimes when I am called upon to perform a marriage ceremony, I wind up the matter with this kind of a statement, "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder;" and that is well taken, too. All right; let's try it. "He that believeth [item No. 1] and is baptized [item No. 2] shall be saved [item No. 3]." What did God join together? Faith and baptism. And now let me repeat the final part of the marriage ceremony: "What God, therefore, hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Heaven has never authorized the divorce or the parting of those two statements, and as long as time shall last that statement will be in God's book exactly as it is therein put.

Now, will you watch the statement? "He that believeth [the first point] and is baptized [the second point] shall be saved." Just allow me to say this: If you will take away

the word "salvation" and put a thousand dollars in its place, we would have some baptizing in Nashville, just as sure as you are here. Suppose the passage read: "He that believeth and is baptized shall receive a thousand dollars." I think, ladies and gentlemen, I know enough about humanity to know just what would happen in this splendid city. Why not, my friends, with equal thought and equal analysis and reasoning, understand that God Almighty has placed salvation at the end of obedience to his will?

But, Mark, where shall we commence? Now, Mark, didn't say, and so I pass it again.

But let me introduce to you Luke as the third witness. Luke says: "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." I have learned two things additional to the evidence of Matthew or Mark. What they said can be absolutely true, and yet Luke's supplement thereunto.

Luke injects into the commission as given by the Savior the item of repentance; and, therefore, a gospel sermon to-night that leaves repentance out is a sermon and a gospel that is mutilated. A sermon to-night with faith left out is not a gospel sermon. A gospel with baptism left out is not the gospel commanded by Christ to be preached unto all the world and to every creature.

Where begin, Luke? "At Jerusalem." Hence, after Jesus Christ had given the commission, I am not surprised that he said: "Go to Jerusalem, and there tarry until you be endued with power from on high." There is too much at stake for it to be left to men unguided and unaided by inspiration. Hence, go and wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. They went to Jerusalem and waited for the coming of the Holy Spirit; and when Jesus wended his way back to glory and had dispatched the Spirit from heaven to earth to consummate the work of redemption by him begun, the apostles began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit of God gave them utterance. And having explained unto the multitudes as-

sembled the miraculous doings of the day, Peter said: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words." I want you to know, my friends, how Peter understood and applied that commission; and be it remembered also that it was a fine occasion for its beginning, for there were Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven, that had there assembled. So Peter said: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."

What is Peter doing? Preaching the gospel of the Son of God, announcing the first fact therein—they had killed the Christ and with wicked hands had crucified the Savior of the world.

He next speaks of the fact that he has been buried, but that it was not possible that he should be holden of death; therefore God hath raised him up. What for? For to sit on David's throne—David's tabernacle rebuilded, which from the days of Zedekiah had lain in waste; but, indeed, of the seed of David, God had raised up his Christ to sit on his throne and sway the scepter of authority over the entire realm of mortal man.

Hence, he finally concludes by saying: "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne. . . . This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. . . . Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Thus Peter preached the gospel, guided by inspiration; and when it went home to the hearts of the people, they were pierced, they were pricked, they were cut to their hearts, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Now, note that Peter said unto them: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,

and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." And so on. The last verse suggests that God added unto the church day by day such as were being saved.

Thus, ladies and gentlemen, have I tried to present to you the full statement, as recorded by each of the characters, respecting the wonderful commission given by God to men.

With the same old gospel preached to-night, with the Savior's love, with God's mercy, with heaven's interest, with the Spirit's pleading, I beg of you in this presence to believe on the Lord with all your heart, to renounce that stubborn will, to turn your back upon the past, to confess with the mouth that which I trust you believe in the heart, and then to walk down into the water and there be buried, and rise determined to walk in newness of life. I bid you come to-night and give me your hand, give God your heart, and start out toward "the city which hath foundations" while all things are well.

THE CONVERSION OF A CIVIL OFFICER.

I am exceedingly grateful, ladies and gentlemen, both to you and to Almighty God for that disposition that characterizes this splendid audience in manifesting its desire to hear proclaimed, not the opinions of men nor fancy's stories that might be related, but the sound, sober, and sane announcement recorded by inspiration. I rejoice that I have been able to present to you the unvarnished truths of the word of God. I believe that I have from time to time before me an audience made up of honest, earnest, sincere, unprejudiced, and unbiased people. I think I can read in your very countenances and expressions that anxiety for the truth which alone can make us free and which only will be worth while when time and timely things shall have passed away.

I want to get before you to-night the story of a conversion under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and I want all of you to listen very carefully to the recitation thereof. From the eighth chapter of the book of Acts, commencing with verse 26, I read.

But before I give you that reading I want you to see the geography of the places about which I expect to read. There was the city of Jerusalem, which if this table here were to represent it, the town of Samaria, thirty-six miles north, would be just about the center of the gallery; then, coming down from Jerusalem in a southwest direction, there was a road down to the seacoast unto the old town of the Philistines by the name of Gaza. After the stoning of Stephen and the persecutions following, the members of the church, save the apostles, "were scattered abroad" and "went everywhere preaching the word." Then Philip—not Philip the apostle, but Philip an inspired deacon and an evangelist—governed and guided and directed by the Holy Spirit, went down to the city of Samaria. He there preached Christ unto them, and a number of both men and women were baptized.

I begin now the story: "And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert." Now, he was very specific about that. There are in the geography and history two towns on the coast by the same name—"Gaza." One of them was the old town that had been deserted, and the other was the newer town and the one in which the people then lived. Now, the angel said: "Philip, you arise at Samaria and go down toward the south unto the road that goes down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, that is desert, or deserted." "And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: in his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the

Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."

Most of the revivals of modern times consist, ladies and gentlemen, of the recitation of various cases of conversion that have come under the vision and definite experience of the preacher of the hour. Now, they are told for two purposes—viz., first, that by the recitation of the certain cases sinners may see just how the matter is done; and, second, that by concrete examples sinners will be encouraged to "go thou and do likewise." While I grant you there is a wonderful power in example, I want to say to you that the Lord found that out a long time before the preacher did, because when he went to have the New Testament written he said to the Holy Spirit: "Let us just take one book itself and devote that particularly unto the reciting of various and sundry cases of conversion." And, out of all the multiplied thousands that were converted by the apostles as they were thus guided, Luke, the writer of the book of Acts, selected quite a number for our example and pattern.

As a matter of fact, I think you and I ought to congratulate ourselves in this respect. There are two classes of conversions and two classes of examples from which to make a selection. Now, we can select a modern case of conversion or we can have the privilege of selecting a Bible case. Then it is just a question as to which one we prefer. But be it remembered that those in the Bible practically have passed twice under the supervision and vigilance of the Holy Spirit. At the time they were being enacted the preacher of the occasion was guided by the Spirit of God direct; and, again, when Luke went to write the record and give us the story, the Holy Spirit governed and guided him there. I have no hesitancy in announcing that those in the Bible are genuine, cannot possibly be frauds; and any one in this splendid audience who can say truthfully, as we study this or any other case, that the essential features thereof are identical with his, ought to rejoice and be glad.

I want to call your attention to another fact and a precaution God has taken in this important matter of conversion. In the schoolroom we have our textbooks written in

the very best possible way, and I recall what I think is a good illustration just here that might help to get the point before us. In some of the rather difficult and complicated matters and problems there is this procedure in, for instance, "Partial Payments." On one page there is a recitation of Chancellor Kent's United States rule for computing the interest in a partial-payment problem—item No. 1, then item No. 2, then item No. 3, and so on down the line—just what to do until the end is reached. Then on the other page the author solves a problem for you, gives all the facts unto you, and works it all out. Many a time I have read the rule and, in the words of the schoolboy, "kinder gotten balled up" on it. Now, do you know what I did? I went back and saw how he applied this part of the rule to his problem; and when I got to the problem, I went back and read the rule again. By having both the rule and the example, we can thoroughly master any problem.

Now, I want to say to you that the rule of salvation with us is just as simple and just as easy. God gave a plan of salvation as presented last night. We studied the great rule of conversion as laid down by the master Teacher upon the pages of the Bible. And now to-night God proposes to solve a problem by this rule. If any here to-night do not understand the rule, let us go and see how it was applied by inspiration; and if we get somewhat confused in the problem, let us go back and read the rule again. Now, then, I think it but just and right before further proceeding to ask these questions: Who was this man about whose conversion I read? Where did he live? In what condition or state was he? What was done for him? What was said to him? What intelligence or obligation was communicated? In the next place, what did he do? And by tracing all the steps carefully it looks to me like we ought to be able to see the plain truth as intended. We cannot afford to be otherwise than strictly honest and earnest about it, because, as I have said before, it is not a trivial matter. I am not talking about frivolous and light affairs. It is no child's play in which we are engaged. I am not simply dealing with the emotions and the passions of men, but am

trying to address myself unto that part of you that is cool, calm, and deliberate, that recognizes responsibility, and that is accountable unto God for not only the deeds of to-night, but of every day; and I am conscious that I must give an account not only for the way I must live and my attitude toward Heaven's truth, but my proclamation of that truth to-night.

Well, the Bible is specific along this line. The record says that there was a man of Ethiopia. Now, just what his name was the Bible does not say, but it does tell the position he occupied and the condition of the man. He had charge of the treasury under Queen Candace's government, corresponding, if you please, unto the position of Secretary of the Treasury held by Mr. Mellon in the American government, and which, if offered many people of this good State, would not be turned down with a frown, but most of us would be glad to have the privilege of serving in a capacity like unto that.

Now, I mention that, not because of the fact that a treasurer is more appreciated in the sight of Heaven than any other man, but because of the fact that sometimes I have heard it said in ridicule that he was only an Ethiopian, just as though that rendered him less favorable in the sight of God.

But here is a man occupying a prominent place; whether he be a Jew or a proselyte, I do not know; but be it said to his credit that by his faithfulness and his business ability he had gained the confidence of the queen of one of the richest and most influential countries of the age; and when the time had come for the make-up of the cabinet, for the selection of those men in whom she proposed to trust the wealth of her land, to have charge of all her treasure, this man stood out prominently and received the appointment at her hand.

Now, further, the record says that this man had gone to Jerusalem "for to worship." That is why I know he was either a Jew or a proselyte under the Jewish religion; and I think, just in passing, those of us that claim to be Christians ought to get a lesson here. You figure out how far

he would have to go—a distance of about a thousand miles. By what means of transportation? No locomotives, no cars, no automobiles, no flying through the air—nothing of that sort. The Bible states that he was riding along in his chariot, perhaps at the rate of about three, four, or five miles an hour. But the point I want to make is this: He had his heart set upon worshiping God after the law of Moses and according to the Jewish idea that then prevailed; and he found time—he took time—to absent himself from his business so that he could go and worship God according to the light that then shone about him. Let me tell you: The person, ladies and gentlemen, that makes his business first and his religion second, I have an idea, is just about as near heaven as he will be when Gabriel sounds the last trumpet. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness."

I sometimes get ashamed, therefore, if perchance I happen to miss the meeting of the saints on the first day of the week and put up some kind of a trivial, shameful, and ungodly plea to let it pose as an excuse for not attending to the obligation binding upon me.

Here is a man whose business in every way is more weighty than ours and upon whom more responsibility rests than perhaps any man in the city of Nashville; and yet, notwithstanding the fact that he had charge of the treasury department, his convictions toward duty and toward God came first. I want to say to you that wherever there is a man of that sort that is honest and in earnest and interested in his soul's salvation, you can just put it down that the hand of the Lord is not far from him, and a way will be provided in the providence of God for that man to be translated out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God.

Well, now what? This man had been to Jerusalem "for to worship," and was returning. I have indicated to you that God was interested in the conversion of a man of that sort, and I know this is true because of the fact that God moved toward that very aim, and you note the process. God sent from heaven one whose business it was to minister

unto those who shall be heirs of salvation. But he did not send the angel unto this man that was to be converted, but, thirty-six miles away, God sent the angel down to the city of Samaria; and the angel appeared unto Philip, a preacher, an earthen vessel, to whom had been committed the terms of reconciliation, and the angel said unto Philip: "Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert."

Now, I presume Philip had to leave Samaria before the officer left Jerusalem; but to show you the accuracy of Heaven's calculations, just as Philip came to the very road in which the officer was traveling, there was the chariot before him. And as Philip thus approached the road, he had done all the Lord told him to do. He just simply stood there and heard this man read from the prophet Isaiah. Then what? Why, the Holy Spirit wants this man converted because there never was a conversion under the reign of Christ Jesus our Lord but that it was begun and carried on and consummated as a result of the Holy Spirit's working to bring about the end in view. So the Spirit has a part in this; but I call particular attention to the fact that instead of the Holy Spirit's coming to the man to be converted, like the angel, the Holy Spirit went to the preacher. How unlike these modern days! God's angel and God's Spirit working for the salvation of an honest man; and yet instead of going to him, both the angel and the Spirit go unto the preacher and both of them give this kind of suggestion thereunto: "Go near, and join thyself to this chariot." And Philip ran thereafter, and heard the man reading. That throws a little further light upon the matter. That man was reading aloud, because the Bible said that Philip heard him.

I am sure that he had learned what a great many of us have learned in our time—that you can better center your attention upon a printed page by reading aloud than you can in silence.

But there is another statement also. In passing up and down the country on the public thoroughfares and round about, it is not uncommon for us to find people reading. I

never think anything about that. But what are they reading? Some of our splendid secular papers. The good ladies on the journey are reading, perhaps, a magazine or various articles, and we think nothing about it. There are some of you who have lived here in Davidson County quite a while. Have you ever seen a man riding along some of your splendid roads reading from the word of God? You never saw that. It is a little embarrassing to get on the train and begin to read the Bible. It is such an unusual thing that all the eyes are staring and some one will say: "You must be a preacher." Why? Because it is not common to see folks reading the Bible. If you were to open up a paper on the sport page and begin reading about Babe Ruth's home runs, that would be all right; but if you read about Isaiah, the prophet, that is a different thing.

Here this man had not learned modern affairs, and he did not know any better, and did not have any better judgment than to be interested in his soul's salvation, and the strange part of it is that he was reading the Bible.

Well, I have often thought about how Philip introduced himself to him. He just simply followed after him, and said: "Sir, do you understand what you are reading?" Now, think of that just a moment. If I were sitting in the hotel reading an article and a rank stranger came up to me and said, "Sir, do you understand what you are reading?" don't you think that I would take it as a little offense? And I would say: "Certainly I do. Do you mean to insult me by imagining I would be reading something I don't understand?" Now, I do not know why Philip "butted" in that way. He cut loose from all formality. He did not say, "Excuse me, please;" or, "I beg your pardon;" or any of the little courtesies we have now; but he just said: "Sir, do you understand what you are reading?" It may be that he could tell from the tone of the man's voice and the expression on his face that he was troubled. Time and time again I have been able, I think, to detect that. I have seen students down over their books delving and doing their very best, and I would not hesitate to say this to them: "Do you understand what you are reading?" How did I

see that they did not understand? By some kind of an expression they had. The very way they bowed over it was indicative of the idea that they were puzzled, bothered. "Do you understand it?"

This man, without taking the least offense, said: "How can I, except some man should guide me?" And he just slipped over and said: "Philip, I want you to sit with me." He perhaps thought from the countenance that was presented by Philip he might secure aid. "Maybe you can help me, and I want help, I want light, and I want the truth, regardless of the source from which it comes."

Now, Philip got up into the chariot and started in on the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah as now marked off in our English Bible. The passage is as follows: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: in his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth." And he said: "Sir, of whom does the prophet thus speak? Was Isaiah talking about himself or of some other man?"

Now, do you want to reflect upon that treasurer's intelligence by saying: "Certainly he ought to have known to whom that refers?" I submit to you to-night that but for the fact that we have the revelation of Christ Jesus our Lord, there is not a man in this audience but that would be in the same condition as was that officer.

Let me say in all kindness and with absolute respect (hear it): There is not an unbelieving Jew on the face of the earth to-night that can explain Isa. 53.

"Philip preached unto him Jesus." I wonder what that means. What is implied in preaching Jesus unto the officer? If I were to preach unto you to-night some other man, I think I would begin after this fashion—to make a concrete example of it, let me say this: If I were to preach to you of some splendid, great, good man, like John Wesley, whose memory I respect and whose work I appreciate to the fullest, I would give a review of his career and teaching and influence. I regard him as one of the great men of his age; and if I were to tell you and to preach unto you

John Wesley, I would go back unto his old grandfather, Bartholomew Wesley, who was born about 1600. I would tell you something of his ancestry and of the line from which he came. I would tell you still further of his father, Samuel Wesley, whose determination and persistency should encourage every boy, and of his mother, Susannah, who guided her children in honorable paths. I would tell you about his purpose and the desire that he had to reform and to revive the church that was characterized by the cold, formal sort of religion that then prevailed. I would tell you how, in company with three others, he started a society that by and by spread in prominence and influence until at last the result swept across the Atlantic and aroused the land of America, especially the land of Dixie, from the center thereof to the outermost parts. I would tell you of the wonderful influence of John Wesley, of the life that he lived and the death that he died in 1791, and of his last statements. If I had done that correctly, I would feel like I had preached unto you John Wesley.

Now, my friends, how would Philip preach Jesus unto that man? I have no doubt in the least but that he went way back in the line and began in the ancestry of our Savior to show how he came according to the prophetic declarations—how that by and by he was born of the Virgin Mary in a stable and cradled in a manger; how, to evade the edict of old Herod, his father and mother took their flight into the land of Egypt, and there stayed until Herod had died; and how at last they came to dwell in Nazareth. I would tell you how he came from Galilee, skipping over the hills and across the plains, until he came to the rolling waters of the river Jordan unto John, his forerunner, and demanded to be baptized; and when John forbade him, Christ said: "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." My friends, if the Savior thought that to be baptized was becoming in him, what right have you or I to think or fancy that it is unbecoming in us? "Then he [John] suffered him."

In telling that story further, I would tell you that Jesus, when he was baptized, came up out of the water, the heav-

ens opened, and God's Spirit descended in the form of a dove and alighted upon him, and a voice from the eternal worlds said: "This is my believed Son, in whom I am well pleased."

In further telling about that wonderful life, I would tell how he was taken into yonder mountain height, where he wrestled with the archfiend of humanity, and at last wrested the power of authority and caused the angels looking out over the battlements of heaven to rejoice because of the victory won.

I would tell of his wonderful deeds, of the miracles wrought by him—how he called about him a few of the humble fishermen and illiterates of earth and schooled them for about three years, and at last, when the greatest opposition had been aroused, false witnesses were brought one after another; how his enemies carried him from court to court until they stood in the presence of old Pontius Pilate, the governor, who, after three different trials, rendered a verdict of "not guilty." But that bloodthirsty crowd was hell-bent upon setting aside that judgment passed in his favor while he stood humiliated. O, don't get it into your mind that Christ lost his balance! It doesn't mean that Christ's reasoning powers fled away, but that that judgment that Pontius Pilate declared in his favor was taken away, and in its stead there was the judgment of the multitude substituted in that they said: "Away with him! He is not fit to live upon earth."

I would tell you still further, as perhaps Philip did in riding along that day, how he was buried in a borrowed tomb; but by the power of God Almighty he burst the bars and came forth triumphant, and then led the disciples out and said unto them: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "Preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." "Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

The Bible says that when Philip preached unto him Je-

sus, as they went along on their way, they came to a certain water, and the officer said: "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" I want to ask you, my friends, how came the man to think of asking a question like that? He had never heard a gospel sermon in all of his life. He had never heard of the Savior nor of his commandments until this occasion. How did he come to ask: "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" There is but one sensible answer, and that is this: He had heard Philip preach unto him Jesus.

Sometimes there are friends of mine that tell me they like to hear me speak, and often suggest to me: "Brother Hardeman, why don't you go out in the world and just preach Christ and say nothing about baptism—just hold up the Christ idea, preach Christ, and leave the other out?" Well, do you know that as much as I would like to do the will of my friends, I would be wonderfully handicapped by trying to heed a suggestion like that? Why, I could not even get Christ introduced to the world, because the very first announcement regarding his public career was that he was baptized at the hands of John. I would have to leave off the beginning place. And then, further, if I were to just simply preach Christ and leave out baptism, I could not tell you his valedictory unto the apostles, because the last thing that he ever said was: "Go, . . . teach all nations, baptizing them." I would have to cut short the story at both ends of the line.

Let me tell you in all candor, in all frankness, in the presence of God Almighty, before whom I must stand at the judgment day, the man that preaches Christ and leaves out baptism preaches a gospel other than that recorded in the New Testament. Talk about preaching Christ and leaving out baptism! Impossible thus to do. Talk about preaching Christ and leaving out faith! It is a mutilated gospel if you do that, and you are untrue unto the authority of God. Talk about believing the gospel and preaching Christ and never saying anything about baptism! "I would be ashamed to be afraid and afraid to be ashamed" not to tell the whole story—not to declare God's entire counsel.

But as they went on their way the demand was made: "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip said: "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." Get the response. That man said: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Having so done, he commanded the chariot to stand still. The Bible said (mark it): "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him."

My friends, we have an example to-night given by inspiration. Does it correspond with your conversion? Was Jesus Christ proclaimed? You say: "Yes." When you were converted, did you believe on the Lord? You answer: "Yes." When you were converted, did both you and the preacher go down into the water? If not, you just put it down that your case was unlike this one; but if you did that, you can put your finger upon this passage in God's word and say: "This is exactly like I did."

But, again. Going down into the water is not baptism; that is getting ready for it. Coming up out of the water is not baptism; that is the return therefrom. But after they went down into the water and before they came up out of the water, there was an act that transpired that God calls "baptism." "We are buried with him in baptism." Then what? They came up out of the water; the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and the eunuch saw him no more, and he went on his way rejoicing.

Now I am ready to make to this splendid audience to-night this statement, and I do so conscious of the fact that Nashville represents the intelligence of our State, that you have the most enlightened citizenship, possibly, along Bible lines, of most of our cities of this land; but I am ready to make this statement (hear it): Under the commission of the Lord Jesus Christ no man ever rejoiced on account of sins forgiven until after he was baptized. Find it and get busy in the search. I repeat it: After Christ Jesus gave the commission, until the book of Revelation was written, there is not a single case on record where any man ever rejoiced on account of sins forgiven until after he was baptized. Now, my friends, this is either so or it is not so;

and (hear it) if you will show me that it is not true, I will make public acknowledgment of my mistake before an audience five times this big, if you will get it together; but I will be here a week or so longer, and I am not the least bit uneasy about anybody's finding the man. It is not there—absolutely not.

But let us view this from another angle. As this eunuch went on his way rejoicing, suppose you had met him down the road; and there he was, with his face aglow, with the sunbeam of hope radiant in his every expression and in his very countenance, and you say: "Why, sir, what on earth seems to be the matter?" Possibly he hadn't changed clothes, and the inquirer looks up and says: "Why, it has not been raining, has it?" "No." "Well, did you fall in the creek?" "No." "Well, sir, explain yourself. Tell what has happened. I want to know."

Now, where would this officer begin to tell his experience? Would he commence by telling about the angel? O, no! The angel had a hand in his conversion, but the man knew nothing about it. Would he commence by telling him about the Spirit? The Spirit had a prominent part in the man's conversion, but he would not begin there. If I may repeat the story, it would be like unto this: He would commence in explanation and say: "I live in Ethiopia. I had been up to Jerusalem for to worship, not knowing that the system of Judaism had passed away and Christianity had been inaugurated. And as I was returning, reading along in the Bible, presently I met a man who asked me if I understood what I was reading. I told him I did not, and asked him to get up and sit with me, and he did so; and he commenced right at the very passage where I was reading, and he preached unto me Jesus. He preached and I listened. As we drove on down the road, we came unto a certain water, and I said: 'See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?' And that man said if I believed with all my heart I could, and I told him that I believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God; and he commanded the chariot to stand still, and both of us, both the preacher and I, went down into the water, and there he baptized me; and we

came up out of the water, and he went somewhere, I don't know where; and I am on my way home, just as happy as can be." Now, do you think that I have misrepresented that eunuch's experience?

I am glad to say to you to-night, ladies and gentlemen, that in every essential feature thereof that corresponds unto that conversion upon which my hopes are founded. I heard the gospel, I believed it, I repented of all the sins thitherto committed, I acknowledged the Christ in the same terms as did he, and then Brother R. P. Meeks and I went down into the water, both of us, and he baptized me. We came up out of the water, and I rejoiced because of the faith that I had in God, who said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." I had done that. I believed God's statement.

And as that man went on his way, it is interesting to mention a thought or two further just by way of suggestion. What was he? Yonder he goes down toward his home in Ethiopia. What is he? Of what church was he a member? I bid you think on these things.

Now, there is another feature to which I want to call your attention. Had he been like some of us, he would doubtless have said: "Well, Philip, I must say that that is a good sermon. I never heard anything like it in my life. It looks like it has sense in it; I am impressed with it; and I will tell you. I live down in Ethiopia, and next year I will be back up to Jerusalem, and I am going to think about this; and if I happen to see any of your sort, I may accept that preaching." O, my friends, that is not the kind of a man he was!

The man that is God-approved, that is not far from the hand that bestows the blessing, is the man that responds to his duty when he is convinced of its correctness. He never even stopped to think about what the folks back home would say. It is now. Now is the accepted time. I see the truth. What doth hinder me from walking therein?

I come to you to-night, ladies and gentlemen, once more with this concrete illustration, taken from the pages of God's word. I want to ask that you duplicate that man's

conversion in your own experience. Believe the gospel with all your heart. From all your sins be resolved to turn away. Confess the Christ as he did, and go down into the water, and there be buried as he was, arising to walk in newness of life, and be assured that God has forgiven your sins. If you will do that, it will make of you nothing under heaven except a Christian; that is all. It will make of you nothing in the world except a member of the body of Christ Jesus, the church of the living God.

It is a pleasure to extend unto you who have listened so patiently and so earnestly the gospel call again.

THE CONVERSION OF A MILITARY OFFICER.

I must congratulate myself to-night for having the privilege of addressing such a fine audience as this assembled. One of the most encouraging things to me I have ever experienced is the close attention and the very earnest and intelligent hearing that you are giving while I try to present to you that which I believe to be the book of God.

I think that you will grant my earnestness, sincerity, and honesty, however much you may chance to differ with me regarding the subject-matter presented; for I assure you I have no motive in coming to your city but to preach the Bible as best I am able to read and learn the will of the Lord therefrom.

I want to say to you now, as in the beginning, that the gospel of the Son of God is universal in its application, including all races, classes, and conditions of humanity.

The gospel of the Lord is intended to reach down to the lowest depths of degradation and despair and provide salvation unto the soul that is thus steeped in sin and bowed down under the evils of the earth. It is also intended for the very best man that the country affords, as viewed from a moral point of consideration.

Last night's study was the conversion of a prominent official in the country known as Ethiopia. I am glad to call your attention to-night to another very prominent man, known through the country in which he lived and against whom very few things could have been filed as a criticism or objection. I want to repeat to you the story in brief, not in detail, as found in the tenth chapter of the book of Acts, that you may get a general idea of the case under consideration.

The record says there was a man in Cesarea called "Cornelius," a centurion of the Italian band, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always. He saw in a vision, evidently about the ninth hour of the day, an angel

of the Lord coming in to him, and saying, "Cornelius;" and when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said: "What is it, Lord?" The response was made in these words: "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the seaside: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do."

Now, after having received such intelligence, Cornelius called unto him two of the servants and a devout soldier that waited on him continually and repeated what the angel had announced. He then sent them down to the seacoast, a distance of thirty miles, to inquire for Peter. While they were coming, Peter had gone upon the housetop to pray; and there, while praying, he fell into a trance, and this is what he saw: The heavens opened and a certain vessel descending unto him like a great sheet, knit at the four corners and let down to the earth, wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and fowls of the air. Accompanying the vision, there was a voice unto Peter, saying: "Arise, Peter; kill and eat." But Peter said: "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." The voice answered: "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common."

Now, this was done three times. The vessel was received up again into heaven. And while Peter was thinking what that meant, behold, three men were down at the gate hallooing: "Hello! Is this where Simon, the tanner, lives?" While this discussion was going on, the Holy Spirit said unto Peter: "Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them."

On the morrow they started back toward Cesarea, and during the time Cornelius was busy getting ready for the meeting. He had gone out and gathered his friends and family, so that when Peter came he found that many had come together. He said to Cornelius at the very start: "I am treading on dangerous ground, for I know that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company

or come into one of another nation; but God has showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore, I am come unto thee as soon as thou hast sent for me." Then Cornelius repeated the story. "Thou hast well done that thou hast come. Now, we are all present here before God to hear whatsoever things are commanded thee of God." Now, Peter began and preached unto them the story of the cross. As he began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard the word, and they began to speak with other tongues and magnify God. Then said Peter: "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days."

This is practically the tenth chapter of the book of Acts. I have gone into detail to get that matter before you in its concrete form that you might appreciate all things the better that I may say regarding it.

In the study of this man's conversion I do not know better how to proceed than after a sort of an inquiry raised on last evening. First of all, I want to find out who this man is of whom the record is thus given; next, what was done for him, and what was said to him, and what he said, and what he did, thus tracing the line from the very first announcement unto the very last, when we find him standing as a child of God, his sins forgiven. Now, if we can do that successfully to-night, I think perhaps we may be able to appreciate the plan of salvation as never before.

Unto a great many people that fail to handle aright, it occurs to me, the word of God, the conversion of Cornelius adds confusion and perplexity unto an otherwise simple story; but I think we ought to concede at once that in the conversions of the Bible there cannot be inconsistency or discrepancy regarding any two thereof. Now, be it remembered that circumstances connected with different men's conversions have differed on various occasions; but the items of obedience to the gospel of the cross must once and forevermore remain the same. If, therefore, we can eliminate all the circumstances and show the difference between

them and the acts of obedience, it will greatly clarify the whole matter.

Who was Cornelius? The record says there was a man of Cesarea called "Cornelius." Now, be it remembered that this story is in the land of Palestine, forty-seven miles northwest from Jerusalem. Cesarea was the political capital of that part of the country, to which various officers were dispatched from headquarters at Rome. Cornelius was a military man. The record tells us he was a "centurion," corresponding in our modern military machinery to a captain. Therefore he was called a "centurion of the Italian band." In addition to that, there was a rather strange feature mentioned. The record says that he was a *devout* man, and I think that it is not amiss to say that this is not generally true of the military officers throughout our land or any other land. To say the least of it, it is not generally true of captains, colonels, or officials of the army and navy that they are known far and wide as devout men—sincere, worshiping, prayerful men. But here is one that was a devout man—one that feared God; and not only himself, but he was not indifferent to the rearing and training and impressions of his family, even including his soldiers and servants, because the record says he was a devout man—one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and who prayed to God always. And, in addition to that, this man saw an angel of God coming unto him about the ninth hour (that is, about three o'clock in the afternoon), and said unto him, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God"—in memory of a promise made nineteen hundred years before unto Abraham, when he said, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed;" hence, as a memorial of the world-wide promise that is now for the first time about to find its fulfillment: "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God."

Now, I doubt not but that some of this audience are wondering: "Why did a man like that need anything further?" As a matter of fact, the story thus far repeated, the character of Cornelius thus outlined, would put to shame many

of us that go about under the appellation of a member of the church or a professed follower of the Lord. The Bible says also that he was a just man—one of good report among all the people. Now, you ask: "Does that man need to be converted?" Indeed so. I want to make this declaration: that because a man is good, upright, honest, just, prayerful, does not argue that he is a child of God; and I wish all of you people that are really relying upon your uprightness of character, upon your sobriety of life, upon the fact of your devotion to the members of your family and your relationship to your fellows—mark it, you are no better nor can you present a finer record than did Cornelius. Stand up by the side of him and let your portrait be made, and I will obligate myself to show that Cornelius will stand above any of the citizenship of this or any other city in the borders of our beloved State.

He was a good man, a moral man, a just man, a prayerful man, a devout man, a philanthropic man—one that looked after not only himself, but the rest of his household, including the servants and the soldiers; and yet he needed to be converted unto God.

No man has ever yet been saved on account of his intrinsic worth or inherent value; and if any one is ever saved, it will be by virtue of the fact that he has been washed in that fountain filled with the precious blood of Christ. On account of my goodness I cannot merit nor buy nor place Heaven under obligation to save my soul at last. Above and beyond all of my deeds and my doings, I must render obedience to the will of God. It is by Christ that the world must be saved; and hence Cornelius, notwithstanding the superior type of man that he was, stood in need of salvation. Therefore the angel said: "Send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the seaside: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do."

Now, may I raise this inquiry? Why did not the angel announce the terms of salvation and save a journey of sixty miles, round trip? Why didn't the angel, while in direct contact with Cornelius, tell him words whereby he could

be saved, and not postpone the same for seventy and two hours? Well, there is a reason for that, of course. I learned in the case of the eunuch that there was the interference of an angel; but instead of the angel having gone to the man to be converted to tell him the plan of salvation, in that case the angel went to the preacher. But to-night the angel comes to the man to be converted; but you note there is a specific purpose for so doing.

The angel said: "Send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the seaside: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do." Angel, why not you tell? Mark it! When Jesus Christ gave the commission, he had delivered the gospel, God's power to save, into the hands of earthen vessels; and from that hour until this neither an angel nor the Spirit nor Jesus Christ himself direct has ever dared to tell men and women what to do, but always they have directed the inquirer and the man to be converted to some man on earth unto whom the gospel of the Son of God had been committed. Therefore, the purpose of the angel and the purpose of miracle No. 1 was to inform this man to be converted where the preacher was from whom the information could be had. So he bade Cornelius good-by, and possibly went to tell some other honest man where he could find out what he had to do to be saved.

But be it remembered, further, that Peter, the preacher of the occasion, likewise needs to have his vision cleared; for as yet it had never been announced that the middle wall of partition had been broken down. As yet the Jews did not understand that the gospel was world-wide and intended for the Gentiles. They had been so prejudiced and so biased that they had refrained from preaching the gospel unto one of a foreign nation; and so, in order to fit Peter for the occasion, while these men are coming down to Joppa, a trip of thirty miles, God appears unto Peter on the housetop in a vision. There was a great sheet let down from heaven, in which were all manner of four-footed beasts and fowls of the air and creeping things, and there was a voice that said: "Arise, Peter; kill and eat." But Peter

answered: "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." While he thus thought on what the vision signified, these men were standing at the gate, asking if Simon Peter was there. Then it was that the Spirit unveiled the matter, and said: "Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them." Hence, miracle No. 2. The vision was for none other purpose than to convince him that he ought to go and preach the gospel unto the Gentiles. It was to convince the apostle Peter that no longer should he be bound by racial ties and limited by former practice; but, as a matter of fact, the gospel was to go unto all the world and be preached to every creature. He had never had such an understanding before in his career. But as a matter of precaution, while Peter thus started with these messengers, he took six Jewish brethren with him to be witnesses in case something unusual or out of the ordinary should happen, for as yet a little skepticism dwelt in the mind of Peter as to the course that he should pursue. Thus they went on their way back to the house of Cornelius; and the record says that as they went thus to the house, Cornelius came out and was ready to fall down and to worship Peter; but Peter said unto him: "O, no, Cornelius; don't do that! Stand up, for I also am a man." And as he went in, he found that many were come together. Now, to understand the matter still further, he said: "Gentlemen, you know that it is unlawful for a man that is a Jew, like unto me, to come unto one of another nation, or even keep company therewith; and but for the fact that God hath shown me on the housetop that I must call no man common or unclean, I would not be here." Cornelius said: "Peter, thou hast well said. Now, therefore, are we all present before God to hear whatsoever things are commanded thee of God." With that kind of an introduction, Peter opened his mouth and began the proclamation of the gospel of Christ. He said: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. The word which God sent unto the children of Israel,

preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) that word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."

Go back to the very first and come down the line of prophetic declaration, and unto Jesus Christ they all testified that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive the remission of sins.

But there is another thing going on at the same time. As Peter thus began and spoke, the Bible says that the Holy Spirit fell on them as it did on the Jews at the very beginning. Now, mark you, Cornelius is to be saved by hearing the words that Peter spoke unto him. But let it be understood that he received the Holy Spirit before the words were proclaimed; wherefore a great many people jump at the conclusion that before a man can be saved he must be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Many honest, upright, and quite intelligent people believe a statement like unto that. Hence, it is worthy of consideration as to just why the Holy Spirit came on this occasion. Let me ask the same class of people: If you expect to have a Holy Ghost baptism preparatory to your soul's salvation, why not go a step further and expect an angel to come and to announce a message unto you as it did to him? One of them is no more important or significant than the other. One of them is no more miraculous than the other is, nor is the salvation

of the soul of Cornelius any more important than that of any other man. Now, why was the Holy Ghost thus given? I think that it is well worth our while to ask some specific questions with reference to a matter of that sort. Was it in order that Cornelius might be begotten preparatory to the new birth, without which, said the Savior, no man can enter the kingdom of heaven? Well, if that is it, God knows I want it and all of us ought to yearn for it; but I do not find that the Bible declares anywhere that men are begotten by the Holy Spirit directly, but it does declare in 1 Cor. 4: 15: "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." Hence, it is not by the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

But some one says: "Brother Hardeman, he had to have the Holy Ghost baptism in order to give him faith, because without faith no man can be saved." Now, if that be the way of it, I have no disposition on earth to be antagonistic thereto; but I remember that Peter talked about this very point in Acts 15: 7: "Men and brethren, . . . God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe."

Now, Peter said that, instead of the baptism of the Holy Ghost being to produce faith, faith came by hearing words spoken by his mouth. Others suggest, perhaps, that they must have the Holy Spirit in order that their sins might be remitted—that they might be washed and made whiter than snow. But that is not true, for the simple reason that Peter said on the day of Pentecost, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," and the gift of the Holy Ghost would follow. Was it in order that Cornelius might be saved? O, no! For James (1: 21) said: "Lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."

My friends, take the matter home. For what purpose was the Holy Spirit sent? If you shall answer that it was for any such thing as those mentioned above, I obligate

myself to turn to the word of God and put my finger upon the very book, chapter, and verse that shows that thing is done in some other way.

Now, the fact is this: The reception of the Holy Spirit in its miraculous form does not prove that the possessor thereof is a child of God. Other people than Christians have had the Spirit in its miraculous manifestations. I remember that Balaam's ass spoke by the Spirit of God, but that does not prove that he was God's child or a leader of the church. I remember that old Caiaphas, speaking by the Spirit of the Lord, prophesied that one should die for the sins of the people. Certainly no church would claim him as a member.

But there is a specific reason why the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the house of Cornelius—why he was able to speak in tongues and magnify God.

You learn, my friends, the use of things by seeing what is done with them and what purpose may be served. Suppose I had never seen an automobile. I get in by the side of the chauffeur, and I am wondering what a couple of levers are there for. I see them, but I understand not the purpose. If I will just be quiet for a few minutes and begin to see what he does with them, I will arrive at a pretty fair conclusion as to their purpose and intent. I see him pull one back, and the car begins to move out; and then he shifts forward to the right, and a little further, and then back again; and without ever asking a single question, but just seeing what is done therewith, I catch on to the purpose of the same. When he stops the car, I see him take hold of the other lever and pull it back. Then the thing is locked. You don't have to tell me the last was a check or a brake.

Now, let us follow with the same attention, after the same fashion, and find out just what was the use of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the occasion that is referred to.

After the conversion of Cornelius was over, which happened like all other men's (for when Peter preached the gospel unto him, the record says he commanded him to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus)—after that, when

Peter, together with the Jews, had gone back to Jerusalem, he was called in question regarding his visit among the Gentiles.

When, therefore, Peter arose before his brethren assembled at Jerusalem, the record says, in the first part of Acts 11, that he commenced at the beginning and explained the matter unto them by order. Then what? He said unto them: "Brethren, when I saw that God gave unto them the like gift as he did unto us in the beginning, and unto us who believed on the Lord, what was I, that I could withstand God?" Then the Jews held their peace and glorified Jehovah, saying: "Truly, then, hath God granted unto the Gentiles repentance unto life." Why did the Jews concede that? Because of the fact that they saw a like demonstration made unto the Gentiles as was made unto them some eight or ten years before. What evidence did they have that they were an acceptable people to the Lord? They had heard them speak in tongues and magnify God.

And what are tongues for? What has that to do in substantiation of the fact? In 1 Cor. 14: 22 Paul said: "Wherefore tongues are for a sign." A sign unto whom? Not unto the believer, but unto the unbeliever. Hence, where any man has ever in all the Bible spoken in tongues, it was not for the benefit of those already believers, but it was for the benefit of the unbeliever. Thus it was at Pentecost; thus it was at the house of Cornelius.

On the first occasion the Bible says that when the apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. The unbelievers constituted that thronging mass that gathered on that memorable occasion. But at the house of Cornelius, who are the unbelievers? The six Jewish brethren that accompanied Peter on that eventful trip. What is the evidence to remove that prejudice and that bias? Just, Lord, grant unto them the same things that you did unto us, and then we will have no more to say. And from that hour unto this, no Jew that accepts the gospel of Christ ever has doubted that the Gentiles likewise are privileged

to the enjoyment of the provisions of the gospel plan of salvation.

Now, then, eliminate miracle No. 1, the angel to Cornelius, the purpose of which was to get him and the preacher in direct contact. Eliminate miracle No. 2, the vision of Peter on the housetop, the purpose of which was to convince him that he ought to arise and go unto a foreign nation. Eliminate the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the purpose of which was to convince the Jewish world that the Gentiles were acceptable, and Cornelius' conversion stands out exactly like that of every other man that has been converted, from the reign of the authority of Christ until this good hour.

What happened? Cornelius heard the gospel; Cornelius believed the gospel; Cornelius repented of his sins; Cornelius was baptized. Hence, he fulfilled the items stipulated in that world-wide commission, the great rule and the law of pardon announced unto sinful man.

I think there are many people all through this country that are good, upright, honest, moral, of good report, just, fair, and square, and yet deceived on the ground that God will save them because of their goodness.

I, therefore, repeat the proposition made at the start: No man has ever yet been or ever will be saved on account of his goodness. That is not the terms of salvation. But the items of acceptability demand that good men do God's will. There are people, doubtless, in this splendid audience to-night that all they need to do is to recognize the fact that they must do God's will in order to become citizens of the kingdom of God, that they must be baptized, as the Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the taught of all nations. After we have obeyed his commandments, God Almighty will wipe out every sin and initiate us into the grandeurs and glories of his family upon the earth and at last into the paradise of heaven beyond.

And now, my friends, in conclusion of this talk to-night, if there be those in this good company that are willing to follow in the footsteps of Cornelius, do the things commanded by God, do the things that he did—that is, hear,

believe, and obey the gospel—it will make of you a child of God, a member of heaven's family, while on earth you dwell.

Let me insist upon this fact: that if you wait for the coming of an angel, eternity will find you still unprepared. Angels no longer come, for we have God's will completed and his word revealed.

If you wait to-night for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, you will die absolutely disappointed, for there have never been but two cases in the world's history—one of them at Pentecost and the other at the household of Cornelius. They had their specific purpose, which has been fulfilled and passed away; and we are saved to-night upon obedience to God's will, and not by the appearing of an angel, not by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, not by wonderful, miraculous performances, but by humble, loving, trusting, penitent obedience unto the authority of God Almighty and of his Son, Jesus Christ.

And now, while we sing a song, I am glad once more to bid you come and give these brethren your hand, give God your heart, and give the world your better services, and start out toward "the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

GOD'S IMMUTABLE LAWS.*

I want to speak to you this noon on the immutability of God's law. I preface this address by suggesting that in the make-up of every man there are two natures that might be properly called the "created nature" and the "breathed-into" nature; for in Gen. 2: 7 it is said that God created man of the dust of the earth, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul. It is right, therefore, to talk about God's being the Creator of our bodies and the Giver and Father of our spirits. When these two natures are blended together, we call such "life;" but in the course of time, when these two natures are separated the one from the other, we style it "death." Hence, Solomon said (Eccles. 12: 7): "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

These statements lead up to the conclusion that we are citizens of two worlds. That we are linked with the natural world, no one can doubt; that we are likewise made to partake of the divine nature is equally obvious unto those who are really thoughtful.

For the government and control of man in this dual nature two systems are necessary. One of them is adapted to our material relationships; the other, to our spiritual relationships. These two laws, while not antagonistic to each other, operate in entirely different fields. Paul said, in Rom. 8: 7: "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." My animal nature, passions, and lusts are not subject to God's spiritual law any more than that of any other animal. So, then, the law that governs man's animal nature is wholly impotent with regard to his spirituality, and vice versa.

In the natural things with which I have to do and in my material relationships I do not especially need the Bible.

*For the outline and matter of this sermon I am very largely indebted to Brother E. C. Fuqua, of Los Angeles, Cal.

This I say thoughtfully. I derive no special benefits direct from it. An infant born into the world soon learns the first law of self-preservation, and it does not have to go to the Bible to get it. We soon become acquainted with the laws governing material things with which we have to do. All of our advancement, our progress and scientific development, is but the discovery of the natural law governing those things. This very largely explains why, in every age of the world and in every country, scientists and inventors have either been irreligious or the rankest skeptics of earth. They have gained the mastery over the material laws of the universe. They understand the workings of these laws and have lost sight of the fact that there is another part of man's nature that is not subject to the law governing material things.

I submit to you that from our experience we have learned this: that when we disregard any of the laws of the universe in which we live, our purposes and plans are always defeated. It is a law, for instance, of electricity that there must be double wires on which the current is to run if lights are made possible. If any man would try to wire this building with a single wire, his effort would be a failure. Why? Simply because nature's law demands to the contrary, and no man has the power to change or alter it in the least.

It is a law that by atmospheric pressure water will rise to a height of about thirty feet. The different kinds of pumps used in this country are made with due regard to this law, and any effort to change or disregard it results in failure.

It is a law of a chemical element called "phosphorus" that if it be subjected to the air, spontaneous combustion will result. Hence, to prevent this, it must be kept under water.

According to another law, metallic sodium must be kept under some kind of an oil to keep it from igniting.

Now, we understand those things and are governed in strict accord therewith. I submit to you, further, that in the law of the material world God is no respecter of persons. The rich and the poor are brought to defeat just alike when they violate the law governing material affairs. There may be the basest criminal on earth, prompted by suicidal

intent; and then right by him there may be an innocent babe. If both get hold of a bottle of poison and drink it, death is the result. The fact that one is a criminal and the other a spotless babe does not affect the immutability of God's natural law. We ought to learn some lessons from these simple examples. If the wealthiest man in all our land and the most learned that has ever lived were to violate one of nature's laws, the penalty therefor would be as certain to follow as the night follows the day. Ignorance of this natural law renders no excuse, nor does it save the violator from the penalty. When we come face to face with some law of the universe and transgress it and the penalty is meted out, we never think of putting up the excuse that we did not know certain results would follow. They came just the same. The fact that the penalty is always meted out is evidence beyond question that the Executor of these laws still lives and sees to it day by day that every transgression and disobedience receives the punishment therefor. So long as I live upon the earth I must adjust myself to the laws of nature. I cannot go contrary with impunity. Suffering will come upon me and punishment will be inflicted so long as I remain out of line with God's law. I may fail to plant a crop during the spring, and for a short time feel no effects therefrom; but when the cold, bleak, dreary days of winter rush upon me, my suffering begins, and will continue until I decide to fall in line with nature's laws for the support of my physical being.

No doubt but that many of the ailments of our being are due to the fact that some sort of our machinery fails to function in harmony with the laws governing our bodies. Suffering will continue until an adjustment is made.

All things are held together by virtue of the immutability and unchangeableness of nature's wonderful law. Suppose that electricity should leave the wires in the city of Nashvile and spread out into space; wreck and ruin would be the result. Every apparatus in this city would be rendered useless. It would be dangerous to pass along the streets and avenues. But as it is, I am not afraid to walk about your city. Why? Because I believe that the great

electrical current will run true to God's law and will stay confined to the wires.

Suppose that gravitation should cease. Do you not know that everything upon the earth would at once be plunged into the fathomless depths of unbounded space? The world would stop and cease to rotate. Everything on the face of the earth next to the sun would soon become red hot, while everything on the opposite side would freeze to immense depths. As a result, every particle and every phase of life that now moves would be destroyed. But these things will not happen, for God has given unto us a perfect law, carrying with it the absolute assurance unto all those who have studied such matters. The astronomer can sit down to-day and figure out exactly, even to the ten-thousandth part of a second, just when there will be an eclipse a hundred years hence. He can tell what will come to pass with respect to the heavenly bodies in the year 2000 just as well as he can tell what will happen one month from to-day. How can these things be? Not that he is a prophet, but because of two things—first, the immutability of nature's law, and, second, the fact that "figures do not lie." Now, put these two things together—God's law, absolutely perfect, unchangeable, immutable, eternal, and the further fact that "figures do not lie"—and men can make the calculations that prove true. That is a wonderful benediction, a rich provision of high Heaven unto mortal man while upon the earth we dwell. God's laws are absolutely dependable. You need not be afraid that there will ever be an exception.

Step out into the line of mechanics; and if you get the right philosophy and understand nature's law, you can make a machine that will operate, and it is not a matter of experiment. It is not a question of whether a thing will work or not; if you have confided in and conformed unto God's material laws, that thing is as certain to prove a success as the heavens are above us to-day. My friends, but for that, life would be fraught with dangers on every hand.

The apothecary in your drug store to-day can compound and fill a prescription that will fit a man up in Canada of whom he never heard, and the same thing will be applica-

ble to a man in Europe. Now, why? It will produce the same effect upon one man as the other; and, therefore, the apothecary is not afraid; he knows the immutability, the unchangeableness, of the laws of God in the material world wherein we live.

Now, another thing. It is a law of the material world that like begets like. We never have an exception to that. For instance, there is a book written by Mr. Alexander Patterson, the name of which is "The Other Side of Evolution." In that he declares that from the historic rocks there have been found more than a hundred species of vertebrate animals, about fifty of which are still in existence. And during all the ages that have characterized the fossilized state there has never been a single exception to the fact that everything has brought forth after its kind and after its fashion.

We act upon that principle. Some of you ladies, perhaps, have already seen about planting your gardens. You want to have some butter beans after a while, and you don't think about planting squash seed. Why don't you? Because you have confidence in God's law that if you plant butter beans you expect to reap them. If you want potatoes, you would not think about planting pop corn; and if you want tomatoes, you would not plant muskmelon seed. Why not? Because of the immutability of God's law. It is owing to what you want as to the kind of seed you ought to plant anywhere. If you want to make Mormons, for instance, of course you would not plant Republican seed; if you want Democrats, you would not plant the seed of Bolshevists; and so on through life's affairs.

Now, I want to state another principle. All I expect to do to-day is to get this principle before you: that in the natural world all life must be confined to the law governing the same; and outside of that law, which knows no exception, life does not exist and cannot be enjoyed. When God, by miraculous power, created the animals of earth, he definitely fixed and specifically located the life of each, either in the air or in water. If any species thereof ever enjoys that life, it must get into that sphere where such is

located and there remain. An animal with lungs and nostrils cannot live in a vacuum; an animal with gills cannot live outside of water. Why? God's immutable law has so decreed, and no exceptions can exist.

In conclusion, if there are any of you who know God's spiritual law and have a disposition to obey it, will you do so now while we stand and sing?

11-9-71

GOD'S IMMUTABLE LAWS

(Concluded)

I am sure that all of us who are privileged to view this entire audience are appreciative of the fact that it is a splendid gathering for Saturday night's meeting. It was considered questionable as to whether or not we should undertake to have a Saturday service; but this one, together with last Saturday's, demonstrates to me more and more your anxiety about the things presented at this place of worship. I am especially impressed with the thought that there is nothing here to attract you except the plain preaching of the old gospel story; that there is nothing practiced in these services but that every religious man might indorse and have neither right nor reason to be offended because of the injection into the service of anything not mentioned in the word of God.

I want to talk to you to-night about God's immutable laws. In doing so, it comes as a challenge to our faith and also to our intelligence respecting Jehovah and his doings with man.

I am quite conscious that in the presentation of this thought I will of necessity have to review some of the things mentioned yesterday; but perhaps it will only serve to kindle further study and make us more appreciative of the book of God. I said to you then, and want to get before you to-night, that man is a combination of two natures, one of them belonging to the material world, of which it can be well said that God was its Creator; the other, that which was breathed into man by his Creator; and that these two things—our bodies and our spirits—constitute what we call "man." As long as they stay together upon the earth, we call that "life;" and when these two elements separate, we style it "death;" and the Bible declares that each one goes back to the place from whence it came.

Now, in the government of humanity there are two laws,

one of them pertaining to that part of man that belongs to this world, the material part; the other law, quite separate and distinct, belonging to an entirely different field and has to do with that part of man that belongs to the eternal world. Paul said in Rom. 8: 7 that "the carnal mind"—that is, the fleshly man—"is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." And the reverse of that is equally true. My spiritual nature is not subject to the physical law, neither indeed can it be.

Now, we will agree and run smoothly just in proportion to our acceptance of these principles. First, do you believe that God has a natural law governing the material world? And do you believe that the same God of nature is the God of revelation? If so, I am ready to proceed to further investigation. Of course, if some one believes that God is a God of one and not a God of the other, I should have to proceed with that man upon an entirely different line; but I am assuming and presuming that a large per cent, if not all, of the audience grants the existence of Jehovah and believes confidently that the same God who made the heavens and the earth, who gave those fundamental laws governing material things, likewise is the God of the Bible, the author of the book of inspiration.

Now, holding that in mind, we can move along parallel lines with profit and benefit to every person who will study these laws. Of these two matters, in which do you think God is most interested? Which one is the most nearly perfect? Does God have greater consideration and greater exactness regarding those laws pertaining to the welfare of our material being or those with reference to our eternal destiny? In other words, what part of man does God look upon with the greatest interest—that part created of the dust of the earth or that which is akin to him? Is he more interested in the body which he framed than in the spirit he has given us?

Now, as I have said, these two laws with which we have to do are quite distinct the one from the other. In the natural world I do not need God. I derive direct no especial help therefrom. I have learned to adjust myself unto na-

ture's laws and to be governed and guided thereby. All the material progress, the advanced civilization of which we boast, has been but the discovery of those natural laws and the applying of them to the various concerns of our material relationships.

Now, I must say, on the other hand, that God's spiritual law has not a thing to do with the material things of earth—not that Jehovah could not have so related them; it was that he did not see fit to do it. God could have answered numbers of questions about which man is concerned.

It would have been quite easy for the Lord Jesus Christ to have told us whether or not Saturn, Uranus, or Neptune were inhabited. He could have told us about the conditions of the interior of the earth. There are a thousand and one problems in the material world he might have solved. But the book of revelations is addressed to that part of man known as his spiritual being. Now, I said to you further in regard to natural law: The man that disregards and disrespects it always meets with defeat, and no man that ever lived has proved an exception thereto. You can use some of the most common illustrations of life; and if you or I profit thereby, we will observe the law governing the same.

This is just as true with reference to spiritual matters. Disregard of God's spiritual law has likewise universally brought defeat, though, perhaps, unintended on the part of him who violates it. You can commence with the first pair in paradise, and descend the stream of human generations for sixty centuries, and not one single exception can be found.

Grandfather Adam perhaps thought that in violating God's law no penalty would follow; but he was wonderfully mistaken, and, as a result, the death sentence was passed upon him and his posterity.

When Cain undertook to worship God other than by faith, undertook to substitute for the thing which God commanded, defeat, disgrace, and punishment were the result.

When Abraham and Sarah reached that period in life where it ceased to be with her after the manner of women, God promised a son through whom the nations of the earth

were to be blessed. She was so anxious to have God's promise fulfilled that she and Abraham formed a committee on "ways and means" by which the promise could be fulfilled and the end accomplished. The plan adopted was for her to sacrifice her own natural affection and allow her husband to go in unto another woman. Now, I have no censure to offer. I think their motives were pure, their intentions were good; but it seemed to them that God had made a mistake—that his plan would not work. So they undertook to supplement and legislate in order that the Lord's promise might come true. But what was the result? After Ishmael was born, God said to Abraham: "Not in Ishmael. He is not the one; and, notwithstanding you violated the law with the purest of motives, yet you have met with defeat, for in a child of whom Sarah is to be the mother that promise must come to pass."

Well, that is true all down the line—never an exception to it anywhere. But both in the natural world and in the spiritual realm God is no respecter of persons. Sometimes we wonder why it is, in the material world, that some of the best people of the earth are taken and borne aloft to their heavenly home; we sometimes wonder why it is that God took one and left the other. I think we ought not to raise this question. I think it is a lack of faith on our part if we do and a failure to understand God's immutable law. I do not think Jehovah wants me to die to-night; and were I, by some happening or other, thus to have my life snapped out, I do not believe he willed it. But if I violate any law and upset the machinery of my being, unless I can have it adjusted and put back in harmony, the chances are that, according to the immutability of God's law, death will come upon me.

Let anybody—an innocent babe—go out and take hold of a live electric wire. What is the result? Do you think God will kill it as an act of vengeance? O, no. But, according to his unchangeable law, that helpless, pure, innocent babe will die as a result just as quickly as the most hardened criminal in your State penitentiary. Why? Because that is God's law about it; and when you violate it, the penalty is yours, and God is no respecter of persons.

Just so in the spiritual realm. Peter said when he went to the house of Cornelius (Acts 10: 34, 35): "I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." There is no respect of persons with Jehovah. The best man on earth from a moral point of view that fails to conform to God's law will die and be damned just as quickly as the open violator of all laws of the land. Why? Because salvation, physical as well as eternal, is based on conformity to God's law. I cannot live in this world a physical life in disobedience to the laws of nature, and I cannot live in the spiritual realm in violation of God's spiritual law, and I ought to learn that.

Now, I submit to you another proposition: God Almighty (mark it), in either nature or in grace, has never inflicted a single penalty upon any soul that has ever lived except when that soul was in disobedience, direct or indirect, to God's law. Now, you may turn to the Bible and commence with the first chapter of Genesis and read through the entire sixty-six books thereof. I repeat: No man was ever condemned by God except in violation and in disregard of God's law. Now, I can reverse that and with equal correctness say this: No man has ever been blessed of Jehovah except as a result of his obedience unto God's law. They are just as dependable, as reliable, as absolute in the spiritual realm as they are in the material and physical world.

Did you ever stop to think of the dependability of God's laws? But for that fact I would be afraid to gather in a building like this to-night for fear of collapse or some great tragedy occurring. But for the reliability of God's laws I would be afraid to walk along the streets, lest the electric current might leave the line and dash off, causing death and destruction in its path. But for the law's being dependable I would be afraid to get in a car and start on a trip across the country. But I know one thing: that if, for instance, the automobile is properly adjusted according to God's law and the machinery thereof kept intact, and if a

supply of gasoline is furnished, I know that it will run and you can rely upon it just as long as it is in harmony with the laws governing machinery. If Mr. Henry Ford did not believe absolutely and without any reservation in the dependability of the laws of God in the material world, he would not think about wanting Muscle Shoals or spending one dime for the same. His confidence in the certainty of God's law is absolute.

Now, why can we not have the same respect and the same faith and the same confidence in God's spiritual law? And let me say: That is the faith that it takes to save the soul. That is the faith that marches out under the bending blue and says: "Lord, speak, and I will hear; command, and I will obey."

The power of the State of Tennessee is reflected in the laws thereof. Our State is no stronger, no more powerful, than are the laws back of it; and to despise the law of Tennessee is to despise the State itself, for the only way that this State can function with respect to its citizenship and its sister States round about is by virtue of the law and the characteristic dignity thereof. Just in proportion to our regard for the law of our State is our respect for the State itself. Let our people pass out and become anarchists. Let us despise the laws that are made up at the Capitol. Let us repudiate them, and what is the result? The State receives a black mark upon it. Let your officials, be they whosoever they may, fail to enforce or respect the laws themselves, and shame and disgrace are upon our fair name. Just so with respect to God. God's power is manifest in his law, and the man that respects God's law respects the God that made the law, and the man that disrespects God's law is disrespectful to Jehovah himself. Hence, Solomon well said (hear it): "The man that turneth away his ear from hearing God's law, even that man's prayer shall be an abomination unto God."

I know there are people that make much ado regarding prayer. I want to say to you, not to be misunderstood, that there is not a man on earth that believes more in prayer than I do; and yet I know that any kind of a prayer offered

by a soul that does not respect and bow in subjection to God's law is not a prayer acceptable unto High Heaven. Listen at the words again: "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination."

Now, just to be plain about it, you can bow down upon your knees and pray for a hundred years, and the world may think that is an exhibition of religion; but unless you submit to God's laws, your prayers are but a sounding brass or tinkling cymbal.

James says that to stumble in one point even is to be guilty of rebelling in the whole. If I have a disposition to-night not to respect just one single point of the law of my State, I stand in rebellion unto the powers that be. Just so, if I stand to-night refusing, stubbornly failing, to render obedience unto every part and phase of God's law, the Bible says that I stand guilty of having violated the whole.

Let me try to illustrate that in plain terms. A father bids his son to erect a house on a certain part of his farm. He then says: "Put up a barn one hundred and fifty feet to the north and dig a well twenty-five feet east of the house." The boy erects the home and builds the barn as indicated, but either refuses to dig the well at all or locates it other than commanded. Now, I want to say that this boy has not obeyed his father in a single item. He built the home at the appointed place, not because his father so ordered, but because it suited him. So with the barn. Why not dig the well? Simply because it is not according to the boy's own fancy. He failed in one point and evidenced a spirit of disrespect and disregard. The obedient girl does what her mother says, regardless of her own opinion. I do not have in mind a concrete example.

But let me suggest another thought in passing along. I want to say to you that it is a fixed and immutable law, both in nature and in grace, that like produces like—that everything shall bring forth after its kind. God repeated that law nine times over in the first chapter of the book of Genesis, and in all the world those who have labored hardest to set aside the word of God have never been able to

show us a single specimen unlike that from which it came. We have never found any kind of an animal or creature in the process of transition from one species to the other, but God's law has evermore been vindicated. From an egg the proud American eagle will come forth and soar above the clouds; but, in turn, she will lay another egg, from which will be hatched another eagle of the same kind. Thus it ever is according to God's law.

Now, in the natural law, if you want turnips, you had better sow turnip seed. Everybody knows that. If you want watermelons, you had better plant watermelon seed. If you want a crop of alfalfa, you should not sow German millet. Why? Because of the immutability of God's law.

Apply this principle to other things. If you want to make Socialists, what kind of seeds do you think you ought to sow? If you desire a crop of Republicans, sow the seed of genuine, old-fashioned Republicanism; and if it makes anything, it will make after its kind. If you want to make Odd Fellows, don't sow the seeds of Pythianism. You can no more make an Odd Fellow by sowing Knights of Pythias seed than you can get squash by sowing cabbage seed. Do you want to make anarchists? Then what? Sow the seed of anarchism.

Now, then, in a more serious strain. God Almighty has decreed that if you want to make Christians there is only one kind of seed to sow. Let it be understood once for all, because it is the truth, that the seed of the kingdom, the seed of the gospel, will never make you anything else except a child of God. And if you produce any other kind of crop, there must be some other kind of seed sown in the heart; otherwise God might step down from his throne and announce that he has made a failure in his everlasting and unchanging laws.

My chief ambition and supreme purpose is this: I want to make of all men everywhere Christians, disciples of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I would like to make of all men just simply members of the church of the Bible. May I say it? If I had my way, there would be but one church on this earth, and that would be the church that was bought

by the blood of the Son of God, the church that is filled with his Spirit, the church that is guided by his counsel. the church that is ultimately and at last to be crowned with his matchless glory. If I had my way about it, there would be but one creed, but one discipline, but one confession of faith, but one church directory, but one church manual; and that would be God's book, the Bible, the word, a lamp to our feet and a light unto our path. Then I could offer to every man everywhere a platform on which all of us could unitedly stand without the sacrifice of a single principle. I want to announce to you one more time that if I stand contending for one single thing unauthorized by the book of God, all you have to do is to let me know that, and I am ready to quit at the very first opportunity. If, on the other hand, there be anything demanded in God's word that I do not preach and practice, I want to introduce it before the rising of to-morrow's sun.

Now, let me call attention to this statement. I said to you that all life is circumscribed and bounded by law. It is illustrated, for instance, by the life of a fish. God made fish life in the very morning of creation. Now, query: Where did God locate the life that a fish is to enjoy? Not in the Sahara desert, not upon Church Street, not upon Capitol Hill. God located fish life down in Cumberland River, or in water; and if any fish expects to continue in the full enjoyment of that life, it must stay in water, because its life is located there. Now, what would you think of a great big yellow cat about two feet long, lifted out of Cumberland River, that began to soliloquize after this fashion? "Look here. I don't think a fish has to stay in the creek in order to enjoy life. I think there are just as good fish out of the creek as there are in the creek, and I believe that I will just stay upon dry land and flop about, and I will get along just about as well as those fish down in the creek." Why, you would turn and say to him: "You foolish fish, trying to violate God's law! You can't do that."

Land animals have a life that all of them appreciate and enjoy. Where is it? In the atmosphere, out of water; and if they enjoy that kind of a life, they must live in the atmos-

phere that envelops the earth. What would you think about a sheep, for instance, that would say: "I think you can live just as well in a vacuum as you can out in the air?" Well, I think we would question its judgment, to say the least of it.

Now, make the application which already you see. I ask you, my friends, in all candor, God Almighty being the author of spiritual and eternal life, where did God locate it? There are just two places. It is either in the devil's kingdom or it is in God's kingdom. Which one do you say? Why, that thing is settled. God located spiritual, eternal life in the family of God, in heaven's family, in the church of the First-born; and yet there are numbers of characters that talk about it in this manner: "O, I don't think you have to become a member of God's church in order to enjoy spiritual life! I think there are just as good folks on the outside as there are on the inside." Well, now, if that be true, you have rendered mutable that which God has declared unchangeable; and I am ready to say to you, without fear of successful contradiction from any source, that spiritual life, that eternal life, is found only in the family and in the kingdom of God, and not in the kingdom of the devil; and if you and I ever become beneficiaries thereof, we will do so by conforming to God's law, and that is by getting into that family and that kingdom wherein that life is located.

But I submit to you this final thought. Some one may say: "I thought we were saved by grace, and not by law." Well, that is a great statement. The first part of it is absolutely true. We are saved by grace, and at the same time we are saved by law. By what law? By the law of faith. Listen as I repeat the statement (Eph. 2: 8): "By grace are ye saved through faith." That is the law by which we are saved by grace, a law that acts through the system that we call "faith." Does anybody expect to be saved without faith? Certainly not, for Paul said (Heb. 11: 6) that without faith it is impossible to please God.

But let us examine just a moment. In Rom. 5: 21 we find this statement: that grace reigns, runs, or rules through righteousness. Where is grace to be found? O, it is abun-

dant! It is absolutely free, and it reigns through righteousness. Now, what is righteousness? From David's statement in Ps. 119: 172, "all thy [God's] commandments are righteousness." Therefore, grace reigns through the commandments of God Almighty. Let me illustrate: Water, so necessary to the human family, is absolutely free and positively abundant, but it runs in channels. I cannot go out here in some field and sit there pining and weeping away my time, begging for water, and expect God to bring it and give it to me in spite of myself; but I know this: that water has its channel in which to run, either in our streams or under the surface of the earth; and if I will dig down deep enough, I will find the channel and nature's beverage absolutely free. This is God's law, and I must conform to it if the blessings are mine.

God has ordained that grace, by which men are saved, shall run through the commandments of God. Therefore the man that is saved by grace must conform to God's commandments, for that is the law by which men are saved, if saved at all.

God commands all men to believe and repent. That is God's law. And when I thus do, I am but yielding to and obeying the law of God; and, as a result, I can say truly that I was saved by grace through faith. Hence, by submission to Heaven's will, unchangeable and immutable, the promise of the "sweet by and by" is mine.

But another thought. The first of everything in this wide, wide world, in a material sense, was wrought by a miracle. After that, God inaugurated the law to govern the reproduction thereof. The first bird that ever flew through the air was created a full-grown bird from the start. The first hen on this earth was never a pullet, but was a full-grown hen from the beginning. After that, all other chickens came by law—were hatched and developed and passed into maturity. Father Adam never had the privilege of being a boy. Eve was never a blushing maid with golden curls. Their creation was by a miracle; ours, by law.

Just so in God's spiritual law. When it came forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, you need

not be surprised that, attending its announcement, there was a miraculous demonstration. And, hence, on that memorable Pentecost, when the law was first inaugurated and given to the Jewish world, it was introduced by a miracle. But from that time until now, in the conversion of a Jew, no miracle has ever come to pass. How are they now converted? By obedience to God's law.

Likewise when the gospel first went to the Gentile world, you may well be prepared for miracles. Why? It is according to Heaven's order that the first—the beginning, the origin—is characterized by a miracle. After that, the miracle is withdrawn and law takes control. Hence, from the conversion of Cornelius on down the line there has never been a single miracle in the conversion of any Gentile. How is it done? Paul answers (Rom. 8: 2): "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." "Paul, how once were you?" "I once stood chief of sinners. I once stood with my hands stained in the blood of my fellows." "How stand you now?" "I am free from condemnation." "How came you, Paul, thus to be free?" "By the law of the Spirit." God's law—not by the American Government, not by Tennessee's law, but by the Holy Spirit's law. "Does his Spirit have a law?" "Indeed so." "What is its purpose?" "Its purpose is to free men from sin and the bondage thereof." Hence, the man to-night that bows in obedience to God's authority, that submits unto Heaven's will, is the one that, like Paul, stands free, justified, uncondemned by God and by the heavenly authorities.

I am trying to persuade you men and women who listen so kindly from time to time to believe God's law, to repent of all your sins, to obey from the heart that form of doctrine delivered, that you may be made free from sin and become servants of righteousness and of the Lord Jesus Christ. May I say, therefore, in the language of the song selected: "Why do you wait longer?" While the opportunity is once more yours, I beg that you rise in the strength

of your powers, in the magnanimity of your soul, and say: "As for me, I will accept God's law this night. I will live in accordance therewith and stand upon the glad plains of eternal judgment, not in violation of Heaven's authority nor of Jehovah's law." I beg you to come.

11-9-71

GOD'S FOOLISHNESS VS. MAN'S WISDOM

The subject about which I want to talk to you this evening is based upon 1 Cor. 1: 25, and it may be announced, "The Foolishness and Weakness of God Contrasted with the Wisdom and Strength of Man." Paul says: "The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." This was addressed unto the church at Corinth, a city of about four hundred thousand population, in the southern part of the Grecian Peninsula, marking the outward post of Paul's greatest missionary labors, and in which he, after continued effort, succeeded in establishing the church which he styled the "church of God."

I think in this, ladies and gentlemen, there is a principle announced to-night that may be of general and universal help in the understanding and appreciation of God's method and manner of presenting the scheme of redemption. I can appreciate fairly well the ambitions that men have to try to reason out a scheme of redemption; and when in all of their wisdom they get a theory well fixed in mind, I can understand very largely how difficult it is to convince them to the contrary and to present in its stead the truth of the gospel.

The Corinthians rather prided themselves on their wisdom, their knowledge, and their philosophy. They thought that the things that could not be understood by them and reasoned out from the premises toward a conclusion that would be logically true were, of course, unworthy of respect; hence, Paul said unto them: "After that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness." Then he said: "The foolishness of God, that which you so consider, is wiser than all the wisdom of men; and the very

weakness of God is stronger than the towering strength of man. For God has chosen the foolish things of the earth to confound the wise, and the weak things to confound the strong and mighty, the purpose being that no flesh should glory in his presence, and that we might fulfill the scripture that is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

The gospel plan of salvation, the scheme of redemption, is not based upon premises laid down by man from which a logical conclusion may be reached. It is none too early to say that very frequently in God's dealings with humanity there is absolutely no logical connection between the thing done and that for which it is done. No power of man's wisdom has ever been able to understand a connection or to see a just reason between the hundreds of things the Lord has bidden man to do and the things to be accomplished thereby.

I am positively certain that the Israelites never did see a connection between the sprinkling of the blood of the lamb on their doors and their escape from the vengeance of the death angel. Why, there is no connection in that—absolutely none. I am sure that Abraham never did understand, never did see the point, logically speaking, based on human judgment, as to why God demanded of him the peculiar things of which we have a record.

Now, perhaps that is further emphasized by Isa. 55: 8, 9, where God says: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways. . . . For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." And unless we can get it in our minds at the very outset that Christianity and the scheme of salvation is a matter of faith, rather than a matter of sight and of logical and argumentative conclusions, I think we will be handicapped and hindered and blinded and deluded in our effort to work out by human wisdom and human skill anything by which we will be able to save our souls at last.

Now, I have in mind just a few illustrations of the text to-night that I think will illustrate the very principles an-

nounced; and I call your attention, first of all, therefore, unto the story of Naaman, the record of which is found in the book of Second Kings, chapter 5; and as I recite very briefly just a few things connected with him, I want you to understand and appreciate, if possible, the philosophy and lesson God intended us to learn therefrom. Let it be understood that the record of such wonderful events was written for our learning and our admonition. There is always a principle or line of thought connected therewith that is applicable unto us in the gospel age. Now, beginning the story: "Naaman . . . was a great man with his master, and honorable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: . . . but he was a leper." Now, I think I can appreciate Captain Naaman, as he stood honored by his official position and a great man in the country wherein he chanced to live—an honorable man and by whom honorable deeds had been wrought; but the record says "he was a leper." That is to say, there was a disease that had fastened itself upon him, that knew no earthly cure, that had baffled the skill of all the scientific, learned, and medical men of the age in which he lived. It was but a question of time until this disease should have worn himself away, until rottenness and decay would have been the result.

Throughout the entire Bible that disease is held up as typical of our sins, on the ground that there is no earthly remedy, no power known to man himself, that can rid us of our sins and wash us and make us whiter than the snow.

Now, Naaman's company had gone out and had captured a little Hebrew maiden and made her a servant unto Naaman's wife. After being in his home, she had learned something of the family and that Naaman was afflicted with this disease; so she chanced to make this statement: "Would God my lord [that is, Captain Naaman] were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy." Then it was that some went in and told Naaman. Like drowning men grabbing at a straw, they said: "Possibly there may be some hope of recovery." And so the king of Syria wrote a letter and directed it to the

king of Israel. Of course he misunderstood of whom the little maid spoke. He sent a great reward of silver and gold and raiment. When the king of Israel received the letter, he went into a rage and rent his clothes and said: "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me? . . . He seeketh a quarrel against me." Therefore he turned and was filled with wrath. Then it was that Elisha, quite cool and calm and deliberate, a prophet of God, hearing that, said: "Let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." So Naaman came with his horses and chariot unto the door of the house of Elisha; and Elisha sent a messenger (he did not go himself, but sent a messenger), who told Naaman to go down to the river Jordan and dip himself seven times therein and that he should be made clean. When Naaman heard that admonition, it was quite contrary to his fancy or to his theory or conception, and possibly belittling to his dignity. A man of his position, of his rank and of his standing, might naturally have expected something else; but the prophet simply sent the message: "Go down, Naaman, unto the river Jordan and dip yourself seven times, and thy flesh will come again, and you shall be cleansed."

But this was quite contrary to Naaman's conception, and he turned away and said: "Behold"—now note—"Behold, I thought"—not proposing to be governed at first by what that man had said, but anxious that things would be announced according to his preconceived thought; so he said: "I thought that the man would surely come out and speak to me, and call upon the name of his God, and strike his hand upon me, and the leprosy would be healed." Now, Naaman had that thing all "cut and dried" and figured out. He had the story in his mind, and before he ever heard the glad tidings by which he was to be saved he had largely become prejudiced and biased on the ground that "I have a theory, and this is the way I am looking for the matter to be brought about;" and so he is ready to turn away and forsake the demand.

But after a little reflection further, he reasoned after this fashion: "Why, up here around Damascus there are

the rivers of Abana and Pharpar. Why can't I dip in them and be cleansed?" Now, will you watch the situation? If I had been there and Naaman had said, "Hardeman, why can't I dip in the cool, clear streams around Damascus rather than go down to the river Jordan?" I am frank to say to you that I would have said: "Naaman, I cannot answer." It looks to me like that would do just as well, and I never have been able to understand the difference. In the first place, I do not see what good it will do; but if there is dipping to be done, instead of going way off to the river Jordan, why not dip in the waters of Damascus, the Abana and the Pharpar, to be cleansed?

Human judgment is lost. Human reason says: "I do not understand." I cannot analyze and draw a logical conclusion either for or against.

So Naaman was about to give the matter up, and then it was that the servant said: "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?" Human nature, ladies and gentlemen, has been just about the same all down the line. If, in the matter of becoming cleansed of leprosy, Naaman could have had a big "to do" respecting it or attracted considerable attention and some mysterious removing been characteristic thereof, his servants understood, he would be delighted to be a participant therein, and they said: "How much rather, then, go and dip and be clean?"

Now, may I stop to ask even of the physicians of the city of Nashville: What do you think about prescribing that kind of a remedy? Suppose some man marches up to your office with some skin disease and says: "Doctor, there is something or other the matter with me. I have something like leprosy. Naturally, I am a little worried about it. I do not understand it and want you to tell me what to do." I do not believe there is a physician in Nashville that would say: "My dear sir, you just go down here to the foot of Broadway and dip in the Cumberland River seven times, and all will be well." Why, as a matter of fact, I doubt not but that if one of your doctors were to give advice

of that kind, we would ring up our Central Hospital for the Insane and ask if there was room for another. A doctor would be silly to give advice like that. In the eyes of man that is foolish. Paul said, though, be it remembered, that the very foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of man. Man had never been able to cure leprosy, and God's remedy seemed exceedingly foolish, and yet I want you to watch the sequel.

When by and by Naaman looked upon his person and saw there was no hope, I can see him as he walks down to the Jordan and looks upon the rolling waters thereof and wonders what on earth that has to do with it. "I do not believe there is any virtue in the water, and yet I am a dying man, and all hope has been abandoned. I will try." And he marches down therein and dips himself once, and possibly pulls up his sleeve to see if any of it has gone away. Not a particle—absolutely none; but he says: "I will try twice, and thrice, and four times, and five times, and six times, and now surely some of it has faded." But not a particle had been removed. I just want to ask this audience: Suppose Naaman had stopped there with the sixth dip, what think you about the results? I am persuaded to answer for you. With one heart and one accord we say: "No cleansing from leprosy." Why? Because God had not promised it. There was absolutely no assurance that thus would he be cleansed. But the record says that he went down and dipped himself seven times, according to the saying of the man of God; and as he came up out of the water, behold, his flesh was like the flesh of a little child, and he was cleansed.

Now, what did it? The most simple thing imaginable—that which, from any kind of human reasoning, would be considered foolish; and yet Paul said: "It is wiser than all of men's remedies."

Well, I think that is demonstrated. Now, do I need to stop and take your time by asking: Did the waters of the river Jordan wash away the leprosy? Do you think that the virtue inhered in the water? I presume nobody believes a thing like that. The virtue was in God Almighty,

but it was not granted until the man did what the Lord told him in the absolute; and when he obeyed by dipping the seventh time, he received the blessing and went about rejoicing, as well might he, on account of the fact that his flesh was as in the days of his youth.

Now, I think that illustrates the very text of to-night. God's foolishness has proven wiser and better, more efficacious, than all the skill and all the learning and all the wisdom of the whole world combined.

Well, I call your attention to another simple story. After the death of Moses, when Joshua led the hosts of Israel across the river Jordan and pitched their tents at Gilgal as headquarters and started to drive out the enemy in three separate and distinct campaigns that he launched, the first city he coveted and desired was the city of Jericho, a city that was surrounded. None went in and none passed out but by permission. Now, watch carefully as I tell the story, based upon Josh. 6.

The record says that God spoke unto Joshua, saying: "Joshua, behold, I have given unto thee the city of Jericho." Now, watch the expression, "I have given it unto you." "Now, Joshua, arrange your men after this fashion: Put your armed men in front; right after them put seven priests with rams' horns, then the ark, then the rearward. That is the order in which you are to arrange them, and you march around this city once a day for six days and back into camp. On the seventh day march around it seven times. After that, let the priests give a long blast with the rams' horns; then let all the people shout, and down will fall the walls of the city."

Well, in the first place, I want to picture Joshua as first having said this: "Lord, did you not say you were going to give me this city? Now, if I have to work for it, that knocks out its being a gift, and that will put it on the ground of being of works; but it is not of works, lest any man boast. Therefore, I can do nothing except let you give it to me. I will just sit down here and wait till you turn the keys over."

My friends, as a matter of fact, because it is a gift, that

certainly does not prohibit a man's doing what the Lord bids him to do with respect to the same.

But I want to ask any of your military men—you soldiers, captains, colonels, or officers of whatsoever kind: What do you think about that kind of remedy or that kind of a way of securing a city in the hands of the enemy? Was that ever tried by any military men of earth? No, sir. Did General Foch ever think about a suggestion of that kind to capture a German city—just to have the American boys march around it, blow rams' horns, and shout? That is absolutely foolish. I do not think there is any sense in such tactics.

I stood to-day and gazed upon our Capitol Building. I believe if every man, woman, and child in the city of Nashville were to march around the Capitol for a thousand days, and then blow all the rams' horns in this country, and everybody break loose and give a tremendous shout, I do not think it would in the least affect the gigantic walls thereof. There is no sense in that. It is trifling, weak, foolish. But remember the text: "The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." I want to see if this thing will work and where the power is. Now, if Joshua had had some few sticks of dynamite and planted them well under the walls and had got off and touched the fuse and blown the whole thing up, of course we could understand that. I would say: "Now, Joshua, that has sense in it." I can see that. But what is the logical connection between blowing a ram's horn and tearing down a brick wall? I plead my absolute inability to understand one single point of connection. What is the connection between marching around and tearing down a stone wall? What is the connection between giving a shout and the walls coming down? If Joshua had been like a great many of us, he would have said: "Well, look here. I cannot see any sense in that. It does not appeal to me—to my intelligence. That may do for some folks, but I know there is nothing to it." Well, that is what Paul said. You count it foolish, and that is what the Greeks did back there.

They said preaching the cross of Christ was foolish; but how does it work?

Joshua went straight forward—not by human wisdom, not by human reason; but he set out after the aforesaid order and marched around the city once a day and back into camp at night. I guess some of that crowd looked about and said: "We ought to see some mortar breaking out by now." Thus he did for six days, and still that wall stood there in its power and strength, bidding defiance unto all marching. Not a stone moved. On the seventh day the Bible says Joshua had his crowd out early, about the dawn of the day; and thus they marched around it once, twice, and three times, four, five, and six times, and not a single crack in the wall as yet. Not a brick has moved.

Suppose he had stopped? What think you about the results? Absolutely nothing would have come therefrom. Upon what does it all now depend? Upon one time more around, blowing the trumpets, and the shout of the people. Finally, in anxiety, Joshua marched around the seventh time; and then he said unto the priests: "Give a long blast." And thus they did, but not a stone as yet turned loose. Let me ask you now: Suppose they had just quit and had refused to shout? I think I can speak the truth in saying that God would not have given unto Joshua the city of Jericho. But when finally he bade all the people to shout and thus they did, the Bible says down came the walls of Jericho, and they walked in.

Was it foolishness with men? Absolutely. Did it look silly? Was it a weak thing? Indeed so. And yet what about it? It beat all the battering rams and the mighty guns that the world has ever seen. It worked, and down the walls came. What is the philosophy? God's hand was in it all. The power and the virtue were not in the footsteps around the city, nor yet in the trumpet that was sounded, nor yet in the shout of the people, but were inherent in God Almighty, who, according to an eternal principle, never bestows a blessing until man does what he tells him.

Well, let's try another. The Bible is just full of them.

After the people of Israel had left Mount Sinai, and also Kadesh-barnea, from whence the spies had been sent out, they started out from old Mount Hor, and the people began to complain and to murmur against God and Moses. "Why," they said, "have you brought us out here into the wilderness? There is no bread, there is no water, and we loathe this light bread upon which we have been living. Let us go back into the land of Egypt." And then it was that the Lord caused fiery serpents to come out and to bite the hosts of Israel until numbers of them died. Well, of course, they began to be wonderfully penitent; and they took the matter unto the Lord and to Moses in prayer, and said: "Moses, intercede for us, lest we die." Well, there they are, every man back in the tent, filled with poison, his body swollen, and with death staring him in the face.

Now, what is the remedy? O, if I had been there or if some of us had been present and they had called upon us for a remedy, I would have said: "Well, sir, I don't know whether it can be had or not; but if you just had a full quart, bottled in bond, and could just fill up on it, I believe that would remove the poison." Some of my brethren would say: "Hardeman, you are talking sense now. That has some sense to it. I have tried it." Why, my friends, if that had been true, we would have been wholly convinced that national prohibition should never be adopted.

Suppose some good mother present had said: "Gentlemen, I think I know what is good for this. If you can spare somebody that is able to get out upon the hillside yonder, along the old fence row, and if you can find some mullein leaves, we will make a good, strong ooze, and then apply it unto the parts affected, just as hot as it can be borne, and that will reduce the swelling." Now, that has some sense to it. That is our remedy. We have tried poultices and things of that kind, and such is according to human judgment. But if they had done that and success had followed their efforts, they would have attributed the whole matter to their own good sense and judgment.

"Now, Lord, what do you have to suggest?" Why, the Lord said: "Moses, I will tell you what to do. You take

a piece of brass, and beat it into the likeness of a serpent, and put it on a pole out in the midst of the camp, and it shall come to pass that every soul that looks upon that shall live."

Now physicians and doctors, I challenge your intelligence again. What think you of the remedy? What does any man of learning to-night think about that kind of remedy for snake bite? I am frank to say to you that I don't believe there is enough brass in Tennessee or anywhere else to take away the poison or effect a cure. With all the power of logic, with all the power of human wisdom and of human reasoning, there is absolutely no connection between a piece of brass and the removing of their affliction. No man can get the connection. How is the remedy? It is weak; it is silly, foolish. Paul, what did you say? "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise: and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."

Moses, make your serpent. Well, he did so, and put it on a pole, and set it up in the midst of the camp. And what is the suggestion now? Every soul that looks upon it shall live. O, but here is a man away back over in the corner of the camp suffering so badly, so filled with pain, that he says: "I cannot bear to be moved. I believe, Moses, that it will work, and just let me be cured by my faith without doing anything. Faith, and faith only, is my hope. I do not care to look." O, no! There was no cure; for, in addition to the man's faith, there had to be the act of looking.

Let me announce to you that no man was ever blessed on account of his faith until that faith was rendered expressive in some act of obedience. I care not if it be but the putting forth of the hand and touching the border of His garment, if it be but the turning of the eyes unto the serpent of brass upon the pole, it is the expression of the faith in the act of obeying God's command; and when they looked, they lived; for it was faith plus action, it was faith plus obedience, and the blessing came always as the result. No man can find an exception to that principle. Go where you

will in all the Bible, from first to last, and there is this general, broad, sweeping principle that runs through the book of God.

Where was the virtue? Not in the piece of brass. They did not so understand it. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord;" for God has ordained just such things that are trifling, small, trivial, silly, and insignificant, "that no flesh should glory in his presence." God proposes to have the honor and the authority and the power, but he bestows the blessing when men do what he bids them.

Now, just one or two things in the New Testament, and I think the lesson is before you for the evening.

In John 9 we have an account of a young man born blind, who never had been privileged to look out upon the beauties and the light of God's day. He had lived in the world and had walked in darkness all of his years, until finally the great Physician, the Healer of all ailments, met up with him, and this is the remedy he used for restoring the sight to the blind. Now, what is it? He just simply spat upon the ground, made an ointment of the clay, and anointed this young man's eyes, and said: "Now, sir, go down to the pool of Siloam and wash, and all will be well." Mr. Physician, what do you think about the remedy?

We have a school for the blind in Nashville. How would it do to go out there to-morrow and try that? Some doctor says: "You would not get me into a thing of that kind. I am not going to be made a laughing-stock." Why, of course it won't work. You know there is no virtue in it. Nobody would undertake it. It looks silly; it looks foolish. That is what Paul said in the text: "The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

After this young man, with his eyes anointed, not walking by sight, but walking by faith, went down to the designated place and washed, he came back seeing and rejoicing on account of the sight that was granted unto him.

What did it? Not the clay, not the ointment, not the water of the pool of Siloam. There was no virtue in them, and blindness did not flow out upon the bosom of that pool.

God bestowed the blessing, and the point of practical import is: When did God do it? Answer: After the young man obeyed him. Had he stopped to walk by sight and to understand the philosophy and the "whys" and "wherefores," he would have died blind to the beauties of God's world.

My friends, in the gospel plan of salvation the principle likewise prevails. When all the sons and daughters of Adam, a lost and ruined and wretched race, were groping their way in darkness, God Almighty provided a scheme of redemption. What was it? The suffering, the dying, the sacrifice of his only begotten Son. Numbers of people in the world think that is silly. They talk about how ridiculous it is. I have had a letter since I have been in your city saying that I had gone crazy over the Christ idea, that no such person as the Son of God ever lived; and the man said he was sorry to see a young man of what he termed my intelligence lose his head, believing in the Christ as the Son of God. And many people likewise so consider it.

The scheme of redemption offered through the service and sacrifice of the immaculate Child of Mary is considered a silly thing, belittling to the intelligence and to the wisdom of men. No power, no virtue, no beauty attaches thereto, they think; and to others like those to whom Paul wrote here even the preaching of the gospel is considered foolishness. That is the way some of them think about it. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

Well, what else? I come now to the very climax of the thought—that about which so many people are worried. In the gospel plan of salvation there is a command to be baptized. Who is it that does not know that? I am sure that there is nobody in the city of Nashville accountable unto God and to Christ that fails to understand that the New Testament authorizes baptism, authorizes people to be baptized. But how does the world look upon it? "Why," they say, "it is foolish to think about such. It is absolutely silly. There is nothing to it. You know there is no virtue, no power, and no cleansing effect in the waters of baptism." You say: "I don't see any sense in it." Well, I

just want to join you. You see as much in it as I do. I never have seen any logical connection nor any reason why it is that being baptized has anything under heaven to do with the washing away of sin. I don't believe there is a logician in any of your universities who can take the statement, "be baptized," and from it reach the conclusion that remission of sins follows. I do not think that any logical connection is there. What virtue is there in the water in a baptistery or pool? I think not any. What good does it do? I cannot see a particle to save my life. What change is there in it? Well, I can see this, just from a human point, if you will let me say it. I can see that folks go in dry and come out wet. I can understand that much about it. But what is the logical connection between the act and the result, between baptism and the remission of sins?

I want to say, if you are going to walk by sight and by reason, I can understand why the world rebels; and unto that kind of a man baptism is not the thing he needs. That sort of a character needs faith in God's word, confidence in Jehovah's statements, trust in the Father's promise. He does not need to be baptized. He is not prepared. But when he believes what God says, when he looks not to the water nor yet to the act for the blessing, but looks beyond that and centers his faith not in the act or ordinance or thing done, but in the Christ that is back of it, there is the man that is ready to obey God; and that kind of a heart never halts, never stumbles, never rebels, but is prepared to take God at his word, to believe what he says, to do what he requires, to trust him for the promise. If it be foolish, my friends, it is wiser than the schemes of men.

It looked silly to Naaman, but it was wiser than all of his philosophies, and it wrought the desired effect.

Forgiveness of sins lies with God himself and with Christ Jesus our Lord. When does God bestow that blessing? When does God forgive sin? After I bow like Naaman, like Joshua, like the Israelites, like the blind man—after I do what the Lord tells me. And when I have a change of heart sufficient to lead me to do God's commandments, then pardon, which always takes place in heaven and not on

earth, is mine to share, and the promises are mine in which to rejoice.

And so I would have you learn from this lesson to-night not to walk by sight nor by human reason nor wisdom, but to walk by faith and trust and confidence in God Almighty and his truth.

If there are those of you, therefore, that are willing to look to him for pardon and for blessing—that have a disposition of heart and mind to obey, to bow in subjection to his will, and to do his bidding, and then to trust him for the promise made—you are the ones that are always invited; you are prepared to serve God and to become a disciple, a Christian, a child of the heavenly King.

Now, we are going to stand again and join in the singing of the hymn selected; and while we thus sing, I bid you respond to his will.

WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

I have for study to-night the most important question that was ever announced to mortal man, subsidiary and secondary to which every other one imaginable must stand.

What must I do to be saved?

I am, indeed, conscious of the wonderful responsibility that rests upon me just now in the putting of that query and in the effort to answer the same. I know that impressions will be made, and God forbid that I should give an uncertain sound or fail from any consideration whatever to tell just what the Holy Spirit has revealed in answer thereto.

I believe that you are interested in a question of this kind. We have learned that if it were possible for us to gain the whole world and lose our own souls, a failure would characterize our passage through life; and I hope, therefore, with that seriousness, that solemnity, and that prayerfulness that should prevail, we may learn the truth and obey it from the heart.

Before I go into detail, I suggest to you that there are many things that possibly might enter in some way or other into a discussion of this kind. There are various things in the Bible to which salvation is attributed. Confusion is on every hand because of our failure to appreciate this fact. For instance, no one who understands the Bible would deny that we are saved by love, that we are saved by mercy, that we are saved by God's goodness, by the life, the death, the blood, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Now, all of those things enter into salvation. I would make a very fatal mistake in my reasoning if I were to take out any one of those items, isolate it from all the others, and claim salvation upon one of those things alone. I think just such misconception has characterized many an honest, earnest man's endeavor and led him blindly into confusion and at last possibly into disappointment in the presence of God.

In this physical life we live and have our being and are saved by different elements. I live by breathing; I live by eating; I live by sleeping; I live by drinking and by exercise. It would not do for you to take out either one of these and declare that we live by this alone, and yet it does seem like, in the face of all illustrations to the contrary, there is a disposition to reason after this fashion.

May I suggest to you, therefore, the question direct: "What must I do to be saved?" I want to emphasize every word and every syllable and every letter that goes to make up that superior and sublime query: "WHAT must I do?"

I think the very first word in it implies that certainly there is something. What is it? But note the next. It is not a question of, "What may I do?" or, "What can I language is brought to bear to make the impression—do?" or, "What could I do?" but the strongest word in our "What *MUST* I do?"

If God Almighty indorses the declaration that man *must* do something, I see no way possible that any man can devise whereby he can set aside such a positive and sacred obligation. So it is: "What *must* I do?"

Is there a person in this presence now that thinks or feels like he is an exception to that obligation, that the force of such is not binding upon him? If so, I am persuaded to think he is walking in darkness and delusion hovers about him.

But note again. It is not: "What must my grandmother do?" It is not a question of: "What must my father do to be saved?" That never was asked nor never was answered. But this question is individual and personal: "What must *I* (N. B. Hardeman) do to be saved?" Many people upon the earth are convicted of the truth and see the beauty and simplicity thereof, but refuse to accept it on the ground that: "If I were to do it, that would mean that somebody else had gone to hell." Well, if somebody else has gone to hell, can you help it? If they have not, perchance you can render them a service and benefit.

Instead of the query pertaining to party No. 2, or those spoken of, it is in the first person. "Lord, what must I,

individually and personally, do to be saved?" If every other man on earth were to be lost, that doesn't argue that I have to be; on the other hand, if every other man and woman on the earth were to be saved, that doesn't prove that I would be saved. It is not a question of what the church with which I am affiliated believes or does; it is not a question of what kind of a mother I had; it is not a question of how somebody else sought the way of the Lord. It is purely a question of: "What must *I* do?" I wish I could impart, indeed, the force and seriousness of that to you.

In the next place, it is a question of what I must *DO*. There never was such a question as this asked: "Lord, what must I get in order to be saved?" That is not in the Bible. Nobody ever did that back in Bible times. But it is a question of: "What must I *DO?*" I want to tell you, the opinion of quite a few to the contrary notwithstanding, that the religion of the Bible is a religion of doing. It is a religion of activity. It is a religion of practice. It is a life of service unto man. You take the "do" out of the Bible and from the obligation resting upon man, and you have robbed that religion that is pure and undefiled of the very foundation upon which God intended it should forever rest.

But, further, this is not a question of what I must do to save myself, but "What must I do TO BE saved?" It is both active and passive. I must do something, and at the same time I must *be saved,* if ever saved at all. Therefore man's part is, "I must do;" God's part is "to save" and to extend the favor of mercy and forgiveness. Now, that is the question before us at the present. But various answers are frequently given.

If there is a first-class Universalist in our midst, his answer would be: "Pass on through life, pay no attention unto anything of that kind necessarily, and, in the final round-up of the affairs of men, all will be restored to a state of holiness and happiness."

If there be a Calvinist present, his answer would be about the same as the Universalist's, except "as to the final number embraced in the ultimate salvation."

If there be a moralist present, he, doubtless, would say: "Why, you have to do nothing except treat your fellow man right, to live a good, clean, upright life. This business of bowing in submission to Prince Immanuel is unnecessary. Upon your own good deeds and correct living you shall be saved." But bear it in mind that no man ever was or ever will be saved on account of his goodness. Now, that man, unfortunately, forgets that Jesus says: "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." That man has forgotten that the Savior said: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Therefore, morality, while good so far as it goes, is weighed in the balance and found wanting because it stops short of the duty I owe to the God of my being.

"What must I do to be saved?" That question, under the commission of the Lord Jesus Christ, has been asked practically three times in the book of Acts of Apostles. The answers are given thereto; and, strange as it may occur to you upon first announcement, allow me to say that each time it was asked a different answer was given. Does that cause you to be skeptical? Just because the question was asked three times and each time a different answer was given, are you disposed to turn away and say that you have no respect for answers that vary?

Well, let's call attention to that. The first time the question is asked, or at least the first one that I present to-night, is in Acts 16. The query was put by a jailer of the Philippians in the country of Macedonia, into which some gospel preachers had come. That man said to Paul and to Silas: "What must I do to be saved?" The answer was: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Well, the same thing was asked those at Pentecost (Acts 2), when they said: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Now, the answer is not like the first one. This time the same Holy Spirit says: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Now, that is a different answer from the first. The third time, Saul of Tarsus, stricken down on the public

highway leading to Damascus, face to face with the Lord, said: "What shall I do, Lord?" The answer was: "Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee." Following out that story, the final response was: "Why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

Now, that is what the Bible says about it in Acts 16, Acts 2, Acts 9, and Acts 22. Well, let me try to illustrate and show you the beauty and the harmony in each answer thus given. Suppose that down here on Broad Street I walk up to a man who is to me a stranger, and I say: "Sir, I want to go to Centennial Park. How far is it?" Well, note where we are, just down here at the foot of the avenue, and I say: "How far is it to Centennial Park?" He says: "Three miles, and it is west." Well, all right. I march on down the street; and when I have gone about a mile, I meet another man, and I say: "How far is it to Centennial Park?" His answer is: "Two miles." I begin to get suspicious of you Nashvillians, and I say: "What kind of folks are you? I asked the same question to the second man, and he answered me differently. The other man I asked said it was three miles, and you say it is but two." "Yes, sir." Well, all right. I pass on another mile, and meet a third man, and I ask the same question: "Sir, how far is it to Centennial Park?" He says: "One mile." Then, absolutely disgusted and discouraged, I give up the whole thing and suggest that it is impossible to find out.

Now, is that the idea? Why, every one of these men answered exactly right. And if all of them had said it was three miles, just like the first man, two of their answers would have been wrong. What is the common sense in that? Simply this very plain proposition: They answered me according to where I was standing at the time the query was put. When I asked the first man how far it was to Centennial Park, he correctly said, "From where you are it is three miles;" but when I saw man No. 2, he understood, of course, that I did not mean from back yonder, but from here. How far? His answer was: "Two miles." And when I went further and met still another and put the

same thing, that man understood that I wanted to know from here on, so he answered: "One mile."

Of course nobody in Nashville, if I were to ask how far it was to Centennial Park, would say three miles, regardless of whether I was at the foot of the avenue down here, or over across the river, or within one hundred yards of it. Why, my friends, right upon the face of it, that does not stand to reason and good judgment.

Now, I think if you will apply that same principle to this Bible question, you will be able to appreciate all the things that are said in response thereto.

Now, let's study our first man. The Philippian jailer was a heathen in a heathen land, so far as religion was concerned. Paul and his company had but recently gone there in answer to the vision. They had gone out by the riverside and had spoken to the women who resorted thither, but of that the jailer knew nothing. By and by Paul caused a spirit of divination to come out of a maid; and, as a result, her masters took Paul and his companions and beat them, and treated them, as Paul said, "shamefully;" and finally these men of God were delivered unto the jailer, with a charge that he keep them securely. He was not content that they dwell in the main outer prison, but the record says he put them into the inner prison and made their feet fast in the stocks. The jailer had never seen men like these in all his life. They were ministers of the gospel of Christ, while he was an unlearned heathen. When the evening shadows had gathered and the midnight hour aproached, there was a great earthquake, such that the foundation of the old prison was shaken, the doors were opened, and every man's bands were loosed. Then it was that the jailer became so excited that he drew his sword and was about to kill himself. But Paul, calmly and quietly, allayed the excitement, and said: "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here." The jailer then called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said: "What must I do to be saved?"

What kind of man do you have? A man starting, if you

please, at the very beginning; a man who had never taken one single step, who had never traveled the road that leads to salvation one single mile; and, therefore, at the time he raised the question, "What must I do to be saved?" Paul answers: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

But, Paul, did you not raise the question yourself as to how can a man believe on him of whom he has not heard? "Yes, sir." And you told this man to believe? "Yes, sir." Well, what can he believe? And, hence, the next part of the story is in direct connection.

After having given that command about believing, the Bible says: "They spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." Why that? In order that the man might have something to believe. They preached unto him God's word; and in telling the word of the Lord to that man, Paul felt absolutely certain that it would lead him into further obedience. As a result of having preached unto him the word of the Lord, the Bible says that the jailer took these prisoners that very night, the same hour, "and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." After the baptizing, "when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."

Now, as a matter of fact, what did that man do in response to the question: "What must I do to be saved?" First, he heard the gospel proclaimed by the peerless apostle unto the Gentile world; second, he believed the gospel. Did he repent? The Bible does not mention that, and yet by necessary inference all of us must grant he did, for Paul would never have baptized a man who had not repented of his sins. In addition to having heard and having believed and repented, the Bible says that he was baptized "the same hour of the night."

I said to this audience the other evening, as you will remember, that under the reign of Christ there is not a case on record of where any man ever rejoiced on account of his sins being forgiven until after that man was baptized. Well, I want to make you another statement. In the Bible,

mark you, wherever a man heard the gospel and believed it and obeyed it or had the disposition, you cannot find a single case where any one ever stopped to eat, drink, or sleep until he was baptized; and yet the world says it counts but little. Are such doings merely incidental and accidental, or were they not given to emphasize the importance of rendering obedience straightway to the word of God? Is the jailer's conversion in harmony with the commission, which said: "Go, . . . teach all nations?" The commission declared that the gospel was to be preached, and that is what Paul spoke unto him. The Bible, in the commission, declared: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Mr. Jailer, what about you? "I heard and I believed; I was baptized." Then what? "I rejoiced." How came you to rejoice? "Because I was then standing upon the promise of God Almighty."

Now, I call your attention to the Pentecostians, who, unlike the jailer at the time the question was asked, had already heard the gospel and had believed it, as is evidenced by the fact that they were pierced in their hearts, convicted of sin, and anxious to be rid of the consequences thereof. Hence, they said: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter did not reply by saying, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," for this they had already done; but, like the man standing at the two-mile post, he told them the way from there on in these words: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." They that received his word were baptized, and the same day were added unto the church.

Did the conversion of these and the conditions obeyed differ from those of the jailer? By comparison we find the following: All heard the gospel; all believed the gospel; all repented of their sins; and the Bible says specifically that all were baptized. Therefore, according to the language of Christ in the commission, all were saved and had right and reason to rejoice because of the forgiveness of sins, the reception of the Holy Spirit, and the hope of everlasting blessedness.

I next call your attention to Saul of Tarsus, a record of whose conversion is found in Acts 9, 22, and 26. What are the facts in reference to him? He had secured letters from the chief priests permitting him to go to Damascus to bring back men and women who called on the name of the Lord. As he drew near to the city, a light shone round about him above the brightness of the noonday sun, and a voice was heard, saying: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" To which Saul replied, saying: "Who art thou, Lord?" The answer was: "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Then Saul, trembling and astonished, said: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

My friends, if there ever was a time on earth when Jesus Christ should give direct answer, this seems to be the occasion; but be it remembered that the gospel, God's power to save, had already been delivered unto earthen vessels, and hence the Savior's failure to respond direct. He only said this: "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." Saul was led on by the hand of his companions, and abode in the city of Damascus, where for three days and three nights he neither did eat nor drink, but was in a patient, prayerful mood.

Now note: The Lord had appeared to Ananias, an earthen vessel, and had directed him to the very spot in which Paul was. When convinced of his duty, Ananias went and found the man in whose conversion heaven was interested, and who had been directed thither with the assurance that he would be told what he must do. Ananias did not tell him, as Paul told the jailer, to believe on the Lord; for this he had already done. Neither did he tell him, as did Peter the Pentecostians, to repent. Why not? Because of the fact that already Saul had heard the story of the cross. Ananias saw that he was a penitent believer, and, like the man at the one-mile post, he simply told him the rest of the way in these words: "Saul, seeing you are penitent and a believer, and since I have been ordered to direct you, let me ask that you "arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." This is what the

Lord said must be done, for it is the only thing demanded of Saul at this time by Ananias.

Therefore the important question, "What must I do to be saved?" was answered on three different occasions with a view to the condition of the characters at the time it was put. When analyzed and understood, the answers thereto are absolutely one and the same.

As a final summary, it is simply this: Hear the gospel of the Son of God, believe the gospel with all your heart, honestly and truly repent of all your sins, and walk down into the water, as did Philip and the treasurer, and there, upon a public confession of your faith in the crucified One, be buried for the remission of sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; arise therefrom to walk in newness of life, and then walk in it the remnant of your days. If this you will do and live faithful to that pledge and to that obligation assumed, by and by, when life's fitful dreams shall have passed and all things timely shall have faded away, God will send his angels to bear you up as on eagles' wings into his eternal paradise.

We sing the song again to-night; and if there are any here impressed by the story and have it in your hearts to obey the Lord, the opportunity is extended, and may God help you to come while you can.

THE SAVIOR'S INVITATION

While looking over this large audience, I was just thinking by way of comparison: I live in one of the smallest counties of Tennessee. There are practically as many gathered in this auditorium to-night as there are in the entire county from whence I came; and by way, therefore, of comparison, I think of the wonderful, wonderful responsibility that rests upon me in trying to speak to you and trying to impress you with the thought that not only will last throughout the realm of time, but will carry its influence into the boundless beyond.

I am hoping and praying as I speak that nothing unsound or possibly detrimental may be announced. I want to talk to you about the Savior's invitation. It is found in Matt. 11: 28-30.

But, preparatory to that, there are some passages of scripture that may be of interest by way of further introduction. Let me call your attention before I read to the geography connected with these verses. About seventy miles north of the sea called the "Dead Sea" is the one known as "Galilee," "Tiberias," "Chinnereth," or "Gennesaret." On the shores thereof are three prominent cities. On the north is the city of Bethsaida; then just a little distance west is Chorazin; then, swinging down to the west, is the city of Capernaum, in which the Savior lived toward the latter part of his career; toward the southwest is the little town of Nazareth, in which the Savior's early life was spent.

Now, commencing with verse 20 of this chapter, there are these words: "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon [the Old Testament cities on the Phenician coast], they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than

for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven [not that Capernaum was any higher topographically than the others, because they were all upon a plane; but in the way of privileges, advantages, and special favors this was said], shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day." Now to the text direct (verses 28-30): "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

I want to say to this audience that there is one lesson to be derived from the first part of this scripture that I believe ought to strike home, and that is this: that people are accountable unto God to-night not only for what they know, but for what they could find out. And if there is any lesson at all, it is this: there will be more consideration shown in the day of judgment for those cities that never had an opportunity to hear God's message than for those that have had these privileges and rejected them.

That leads me to state to you that Nashville, Tenn., is quite an unfavorable city from which to pass to the judgment unprepared. I would much rather take my start from the Congo State, in Africa, than to go from Tennessee. I would much rather live and die in the South Sea Islands and risk favors at the hand of God in the day of judgment than to pass from this that you properly style, perhaps, the very "Athens of the South," and from a country in which Bibles are printed and distributed, a country where the gospel of Christ can be heard on every hand.

I would like to impress upon you the solemnity and seriousness of our passing from this enlightened, if not entirely Christian, land. We are accountable unto God Almighty for what we learn while tabernacling here below. Notwithstanding the fact that the cities wherein Christ had wrought his mighty works, wherein he had been a citizen, had rejected him and his teachings and spurned his invitation, he graciously said to them: "Come unto me, all ye

that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I think that in this is an evidence of his superhumanity and his divinity. Our disposition, when we preach and beg and persuade and wear our lives out in an effort to benefit mankind and be absolutely and flatly refused, is to say: "The back of my hand to you;" "Go to it;" "Suffer the consequences;" "I am done." But Christ understood the awfulness of their course much better than did they. He could doubtless say: "You know not what manner of people you are; and, notwithstanding your insult and the fact that you have rejected me, I still say with loving heart, beckoning hand, and tender voice: 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'" Remember, no king, no prophet, no priest, no bard, no seer that had ever lived had dared to offer such an invitation as this.

I ask you, ladies and gentlemen, does it seem egotistic and out of the realm of propriety for Jesus Christ to stand with extended arms and say to all the world: "Come unto me?" Why, it would be the very embodiment of a puffed-up, unduly inflated spirit if I were to make a statement like that. Were I to come to the city of Nashville, "rock-surrounded and rock-founded," and say to her people, "Come unto me," there would be a thousand voices saying: "Sir, who are you? From whence came you? What right have you to say, 'Come?' And what assurance, if we accept your invitation, that any benefit will be derived therefrom?" But the man that said this had lived in a little, despised town. "He shall be called a Nazarene," because of the fact that the very name of the village in which he lived carried with it the stigma of reproach. But when he made this statement, he had already stood on "Jordan's stormy banks" and had been acknowledged as the Son of God, in whom Heaven was well pleased. Not only so, but he had gone out into the wilderness all alone to meet the archenemy of mankind—to be weighed in the balance. From this mighty conflict he had come forth triumphant and victorious. Well might the angelic host come and minister unto him.

To have extended such an invitation and to have made such a promise without conscious ability to perform it would have been a mockery and a solemn trifling with the wants and woes of mankind, of which even his enemies admit Jesus was incapable.

I ask: Who is included in this invitation? It is not addressed unto irresponsible idiots, it does not include innocent babes, it is not for the untaught heathen, it does not apply to the impenitent soul; but unto every one that is weary, that has labored, and is conscious of being heavily ladened, Christ said: "Come, . . . and I will give you rest."

There are some things right upon the surface that are implied in this invitation. First of all, it carries with it the implication that those invited are away. I would not think of inviting a man to come to me if he already were heart to heart and hand in hand and in perfect accord. The very fact that the invitation is announced implies that those for whom it was intended are aloof—separate and apart. Therefore, the Savior said: "Come."

But how came humanity away from the Christ? And why do they stand subjected to the need of an invitation of this kind? Strange as it is, you can hardly enter upon any kind of a discussion but that there are different and varied answers. A great many people would answer that the human family was born away from God and away from Christ; hence the doctrine of depravity and the miraculous operation of the Spirit. The doctrine of depravity suggests, as is found in some of the creeds, that "all men are conceived and born in sin." I want to say to you, frankly and emphatically, that I do not believe one single syllable of any such doctrine. And that is not all. The man does not live on the top side of God's green earth that can turn to the Bible and read such a statement therefrom. "O," says one, "does not the Bible say in Ps. 51: 5: 'Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me?" Yes, I know that passage; but think of it just a moment. Does that prove that when a child is born upon the earth it has a heart as black as midnight dark-

ness? I think not, but it is only indicative of the character of the mother and reflects not upon the child thus born.

Let me ask you: Does this total depravity come from the father or from the mother? If you say it comes from the father, then you have the wrong scripture, for this verse does not say a word about the father. If you say, on the other hand, that depravity comes from the mother, then look what you have done! Jesus Christ himself was born of a woman; and if depravity is transmitted by the mother of whom we are born, then the Son of God had a streak of depravity in him.

Well, how came the world away? Without stopping to further that line of argument, which might be interesting to some, I repeat: How came it away? I want to answer in the language of Holy Writ (Isa. 59: 1, 2): "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but *your iniquities* have separated between you and your God, and *your sins* have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." Every man, therefore, to-night who is accountable stands away from God, not because of the fact that he was so born, but because of his own sins, his own transgressions, and his individual iniquities. Hence, the Savior said: "Come."

But not only that. Since man is the one that has departed, he is the one that must return. As a matter of fact, I never spend much time in begging, pleading, and persuading God and Christ and the Holy Spirit to come into our midst to revive, to convict, and to convert. I think I understand the philosophy of the Christian religion with reference to these matters. God is willing, Christ is ready, the Holy Spirit is always beckoning and never turns away a single soul. Therefore, man is the one upon whom the effort must be put forth. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men," rather than God or Christ or the Spirit. So come!

Now, may I draw a picture from the Bible as to what condition characterizes every sinner in this attitude? In Eph. 2: 12 Paul said of those people previous to their conversion: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being

aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." There stands the picture, drawn by inspiration, of the status of every man and every woman who has not accepted the gospel call—without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the promise, without God and without hope in this world. Our intellect cannot save us. Our wealth avails nothing. Our political preferment and prominence, prestige and power, amount absolutely to nothing. Our ancestry, though it be of the finest, has no effect. Unless we accept the Savior's invitation and respond unto Heaven's call, all is lost. As your friend, I want to say to you, calmly and yet earnestly, there is no heaven for any man that refuses thus to do. "O," some may say, "that is mighty hard!" I cannot help it. I did not do it. The Savior thus declared.

Well, note further, we are away from God because of our own sins. We stand subjected unto the things thus mentioned. Not only that; Jesus said in John 8: 24, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins;" and in verse 21: "If you die in your sins, where I am, you cannot come." But this invitation implies another thing—namely, that those invited have the power, the liberty, and the ability to accept the call. What would you think of me if I were to hold out something attractive, wonderfully interesting, and especially desired by some child, and say, "Come unto me," when I knew that it was absolutely impossible? Let me present the picture after this fashion: Here is a little girl with golden curls, beautiful, just at the age to become exceedingly interesting and attractive; but there is a great iron stake driven down ten feet into the bosom of Mother Earth. This child is led up by the side of it. A chain of iron is wound about her feet and around her body until not a muscle can be moved. Knowing her condition, I step back here with a pretty little doll, one beautifully dressed, with golden slippers, that goes to sleep as you put it down, and I say to the child: "I know that you cannot come; but if you will, this doll shall be yours." You answer and say: "Sir, you hard-hearted,

cold, and cruel soul, why tantalize and torment the child by offering that which you know it cannot accept?"

That is not as hard a picture as sometimes is painted of an alien sinner. The world would have me to believe that he is bound in the clutches of depravity—that he has ears, but he cannot hear; he has eyes, but he cannot see; he has limbs, but he cannot walk; he has a tongue, but he cannot talk. He is as dead as Lazarus ever was. And yet they picture Christ as saying to that poor sinner: "I know you cannot move. I understand you are helpless; but if you will come unto me, I will give you rest." Let me say that I could not respect a Christ of that kind. Such an one is not the God of the Bible nor the Christ that died for sinners upon the earth. When he said, therefore, "Come unto me, all ye that labor," it implies that man has the power and the ability to accept the call.

In John 5: 39, 40 there is this statement of Jesus unto the Jews: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." Now note: "And ye *will not* come to me, that ye might have life." He did not say that they *could* not. The Lord never intimated that it was beyond their power, but he said the reason that you have not life is because you *will* not; and I say to you to-night, based upon the same declaration of God's word, if any man accountable to God is lost at the last day, it will be no fault of God nor of Christ nor of the Spirit, but it will be because of the fact that he will not accept the Savior's invitation.

I think one of the saddest scenes pictured in all the Bible is revealed in Matt. 23: 37. It is that of the Savior during the passion period of his life. Bidding farewell to the city of Jerusalem, he went across the valley of Jehoshaphat, on beyond the garden of Gethsemane, and climbed the heights of the mount of Olives, from whose summit he looked back and gave the expression: "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Thus is the Savior's lamenta-

tion and regret: "Jerusalem, weep not for me; weep for yourselves. I would have tenderly gathered you together, I would have hovered you under my wing, I would have protected and sheltered you; but you *would* not."

There is the truth. If at last on the left hand we are placed and he says, "Depart into everlasting fire," and we ask, "Why?" the answer is: "Because you would not." There is the trouble. God provided, Christ died for us, the Holy Spirit has made it known, and gospel preachers throughout the ages have warned us and beckoned us. Yet we are lost. Why? Because we would not.

So, I say, this invitation implies not only that those invited are away, but that they have the power and the liberty to accept the Savior's call.

But next, and last for the present, it implies that their condition will be benefited if they will but respond to the call. I could not fancy nor imagine the spotless Son of God inviting suffering, sighing, sinful humanity to come unto him unless he meant it for their good and for their profit.

Are you weary? Are you heavy laden? Are you careworn? Have you burdens? If so, Christ says: "Come unto me, and I will give you rest. I will remove all of those." That is: "I will forgive your sins; and the man that cometh unto me, howsoever burdened he may have been, I will in no wise cast him aside. I will take your burdens myself, and bear them gently away, and give you rest therefrom." But that is not all. I think his promise not only implies rest from sin, from the worry and anxiety that sin necessarily brings with it and which attaches thereto, but it extends far beyond that. Outstripping the confines of time and launching out into the depths of the boundless beyond, that promise contemplates the final rest that remains for the people of God.

I would like to call your attention to the sweetness, the beauty, and the attractiveness of that rest. Unto the man who has risen in the early morn with the voice of the birds, who has toiled during the day in an honorable occupation, and who, as the evening shadows gather and twilight comes

stealing across the path, wends his way back to a humble home, conscious of a day's work well done, rest is, indeed, sweet. When the business man, upon whom responsibilities and cares have been placed, has finished his task, when his work has been checked up and all things made correctly to balance, he rejoices to be free from toil and from obligations no longer his.

I think I know the sweetness of that rest which comes to those who spend their time in preaching the gospel of the Son of God. I know the pleasure that attaches thereto and the joy that necessarily comes as a result of having told the story. I can appreciate the rest that comes after the meeting has closed and after labors have been expended. When, care-worn and bowed down by a sense of responsibility both to men and God, and when finally the benediction has been said, he can look back, conscious that he has not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God, and then return to those who love him best, I think there is a joy and sweetness that but few can appreciate.

When that old mariner out on the bosom of the ocean, storm-tossed and tempest-driven, approaches the other shore and sees the light in the distant land, he is filled with joy and pleasure that others cannot understand. When the armistice of the last war was signed and our own boys in far-away France set sail for their homes, sweethearts, kindred, and friends, there was a thrill that filled the soul; and when they at last laid aside their uniform of khaki and the cares no longer theirs, they entered into the fullness of that rest for which they had sighed.

As an encouragement to those of us that are trying to deny ourselves, that are trying to crucify the lusts of the flesh and to mortify the deeds of the body, let me say that after a while, when our forms shall have bended low, when our cheeks have been furrowed by the finger of time, when hoary hairs bedeck our brows, when we shuffle off all that is mortal and the Captain of our salvation bids us to stand on the quiet plains of a never-ending eternity, we shall enter into that rest that passeth understanding and appreciate in all its fullness what the Savior meant when he

said: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden."

I come, therefore, at the close of this talk to-night, to ask again: Are there any of you in this audience who will accept the Savior's earnest call? You have listened patiently to this effort of mine. Won't you believe in him with all your heart? Won't you from your sins turn away? Won't you publicly confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God? Won't you walk down into the water and in the name of the sacred three be buried with the Lord, to rise and walk in newness of life, and then walk it until by and by God shall see fit to touch you with the finger of his love and bid you come home? If such there are, while together we stand and sing, the invitation is gladly tendered.

REPENTANCE

I have for study at this hour the subject of repentance. To show its importance and the emphasis given by Holy Writ, I present a number of passages of scripture bearing upon this subject. In Matt. 3 we have a record of how John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying: "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." After Jesus heard that John was cast into prison, he went into Galilee and began to preach and to say: "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." In Matt. 10 and Luke 10 the twelve and the seventy were instructed to emphasize the same thing. When the Savior gave the world-wide commission in Luke 24: 46, 47, he said: "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Then in Acts 2: 38 Peter said unto those that were cut to the heart and had cried out, saying, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." In Acts 3: 19, at the close of a sermon on Solomon's porch of the temple, Peter said: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." When Paul stood on Mars' Hill (Acts 17: 30), he said to those Athenians: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." Then in 2 Pet. 3: 9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Now, with these simple statements before you, I certainly need not stop longer to impress upon you the absolute necessity and the superlative importance of repentance as

it has to do with the gospel plan of salvation. I close this part by quoting from our Savior (Luke 13: 3): "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

One of the hardest things for men and women to do is to repent of their sins. It is comparatively easy in this country for a man to believe the gospel. In fact, it requires more effort to set aside the testimony that produces faith than it does to accept the word of the Lord and believe that God is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. It is also comparatively easy to get men to be baptized when they have believed the gospel and repented of their sins. Repentance is a direct challenge to man's will power; and so few of us are willing to bow in subjection, to acknowledge our wrongs, and to resolve by the grace of God to turn away from the same.

When I decide that I have sinned against God and against heaven and reach the conclusion that I expect to turn away from such deeds and to live as I ought to live, all things else are easy to do. I am not at all discouraged when men fail to repent of their sins, for I remember that in the days of our Lord, woe was pronounced upon the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and even Capernaum, the city in which he lived, because they would not repent of their sins. If a man die without having so done, there is no promise for him in all of God's book, for the time has never been since man's first creation that God did not call upon him to repent of his sins. But may I ask just here: "What does repentance mean?" First, it is a duty imposed upon all mankind. It is a plain command of God. It is universal in its application, and no man can refuse it and escape the responsibility that must come upon him. Repentance is not simply sorrow, even though it be of a godly sort. I would not say that the element of sorrow has no connection with repentance, but a man may be sorry for a thing and yet not necessarily repent thereof. When the Pentecostians heard the gospel, when they believed that they had crucified the Son of God, they were filled with sorrow and anxiety as conviction was brought home to them, and they cried out in agony: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Notwith-

standing the fact that they were filled with sorrow and regret, Peter said: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

On the other hand, repentance is not simply and solely a reformation of life, for a man might thus determine to do without any regard for Jehovah or with no purpose whatever to do God's will. Let me call your attention to Matt. 21: 28, 29, where it is said a certain man had two sons, and he said unto one: "Go work to-day in my vineyard." He answered and said, "I will not;" but afterwards he repented and went. Now, if you can learn just what that boy did, Jesus said that is repentance. I have an idea that when the boy first refused and reflected over the matter and realized that he had disobeyed his father, he became conscious of the fact that he was in the wrong; that he had sinned against his father, who was responsible for his existence; and when he came to himself, he acknowledged that wrong and faced about in the opposite direction. He moved; he acted; he responded unto duty's demand and sought to do his father's will. Christ styled such an act repentance.

When the prodigal son received his part of the father's estate, he went out and wasted his substance in riotous living. By and by he had spent all, and found himself at last feeding the swine and eating the very husks with which they were fed. He is no longer dressed as in days gone by. But now, perhaps, clad in dirty, filthy clothes, he gave some heed to sober and sane reflections. The Bible says he "came to himself." Then he said: "Back in my father's house there is plenty and to spare." And when cool, calm, and deliberate judgment had triumphed, he said: "I will arise and go to my father." Friends, that is repentance. That is what repentance means. It is the change of will, of deeds, and of life.

I want you to notice another line of thought that we may see just what repentance is. In Matt. 12: 41 the Savior said: "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they re-

pented at the preaching of Jonas." Why condemn this generation? Because they repented. Who repented? The Ninevites. When? At the preaching of Jonah. Whatever, therefore, those Ninevites did back there, Christ says that is repentance. I simply turn to Jonah 3: 10, and find this statement: "God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not." "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Those Ninevites repented. They turned from their evil way and faced about toward a course absolutely contrary. From these scriptures I want to frame a definition of repentance, which is this: Repentance is a change of a man's will power. It is brought about by godly sorrow and results in a reformation of life.

Repentance carries with it evidences which the world cannot question. I give some examples of those who have really repented of their sins. The Thessalonians showed their sincerity in that they turned "from idols to serve the living and true God." Hence, they repented. Those of whom we read in Acts 19: 19 evidenced their repentance by bringing their books, valued at fifty thousand pieces of silver, and burning them before all men. The Philippian jailer indicated his repentance by washing the stripes of the apostles, accepting their teaching, and setting meat before them. The Corinthians, unto whom Paul wrote words of criticism, showed their repentance in that they turned from their corrupt practices—their low, vile manner of life in which they had hitherto been engaged.

Men are moved by motives. The fear of punishment, on the one hand, and the hope of reward, on the other, are the strongest incentives to our action in the more serious concerns of life. Paul said in 2 Cor. 7: 10 that "godly sorrow worketh repentance." It is that which lies behind. It is the element that urges and insists and demands of us to move forward in obedience to Heaven's call. In 2 Cor. 5: 10 Paul said: "We must all appear before the judg-

ment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." A wonderful statement of Jehovah, urging men to yield to Heaven's requirement! All of the threats of the Bible—the evidences of God's wrath, God's vengeance, and God's indignation heaped upon humanity—are intended to move us to repent of our sins.

On the other hand, Paul declared in Rom. 2: 4 that "the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." God's goodness is seen even in the temporal world about us. What poor soul is there among us so ungrateful and so unthoughtful that he cannot feast upon the good things of this material world? Where is the man that can be surrounded by all the splendors and the glories that characterize our passing along the pathway of time and not recognize that the Power from whence all these blessings flow has lavishly bestowed upon us the good things of this world in order that we may be persuaded to do his will? God sends the sunshine and the showers, the springtime and the harvest with its ripened, golden grain. He bids us to behold his goodness on every hand, but the greatest exhibition was his matchless love in the gift of his only begotten Son. That Son lived one-third of a century among men. He lived and moved among his fellows that he might lift them to higher heights and to holier realms. His life was purely one of service and sacrifice. But, due to no crime of his own, he was led as a sheep to the slaughter and was crucified outside the city's gate, where he died a felon's death for a lost and ruined and recreant race. It does seem that every man who knows this story would be moved to accept the gospel, to repent of his sins, and to obey from the heart that form of doctrine delivered.

But let me suggest to you that the motives God has intended to move men have seemingly failed, and with these a large host are not content. In their demands they insist that God perform some startling or unheard-of miracle in order to cause men to repent. If it were true that repentance is an act on the part of God toward men, then it would follow, on the ground that Jehovah is no respecter of per-

sons, that he must use that same miraculous power upon every man; and, hence, universal salvation would result. Otherwise God would be partial, unjust, and unfair. If the Lord works a miracle and causes this man over here to repent, then, I repeat, he is under obligation to work a similar miracle in order to reach every man upon the face of the earth.

This miraculous conception is no new thing, for I have read in Holy Writ of a man's insisting that God do this very thing. Do you recall the story of the rich man and Lazarus—how both of them died, and the former was buried, and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment? Then he saw Lazarus afar off in Abraham's bosom, and cried out unto Father Abraham, saying: "Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." When he was assured that this could not be done, he then said: "Father Abraham, send Lazarus back into yonder world, where I have five brothers, and let him testify unto them, lest they also come to this place of torment." But Abraham replied: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." But the rich man said: "Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent." He knew they had the law and the prophets, but for these he had never had respect; and he imagined that if God would perform a miracle, surely his brothers would repent. As I have read that scripture, I have tried to picture just what would have happened had God yielded to his request. Suppose Lazarus had come back to this earth in body and had gone to the rich man's brethren and said unto them: "Gentlemen, I have come to tell you that I once lived upon the earth; that I was a very poor man, a beggar, and afflicted; that I used to go to your brother's home and beg the crumbs that fell from his table; and finally your brother and I both died and passed into the Hadean world. He and Father Abraham have carried on a conversation, and at his request I have been sent back to tell you that your brother is in hell, tormented wonderfully. I have returned to warn you, lest you follow in his steps and experience a

similar fate." I verily believe that had Lazarus come back to earth and spoken as I have indicated, he would have been rejected and his very message spurned. The brothers would doubtless have condemned him and pictured him as "a man clad in tattered garments, fit company for the dogs, and yet with presumption enough to tell us that our brother is in hell. We believe no such thing, for our brother was a very respectable and influential man. He lived in a palace. He fared sumptuously every day. He wore fine clothes, and all the world paid him honor and respect. Surely a man of his prominence, of his influence, and of his wealth, could not be in hell." Lazarus would have been treading on dangerous ground to have made such a report as the rich man suggested. It is dangerous even for a preacher to announce that some prominent man has gone to hell. Of course, if he does not amount to anything here on earth, if he has never been elected constable, road overseer, or a member of the Tennessee Legislature, it is all right; but when you begin to talk about some prominent man, some high-toned gentleman, who moves about in the finest circles of society, who dresses in the latest fashion, dwells in a palace, and fares sumptuously every day, you are treading on very dangerous ground indeed.

I am certain that Abraham told the truth about it when he said: "If such men will not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." This is none other than a clear-cut statement on the part of Jehovah that there is no such thing as direct or miraculous power in the conversion of human beings. God's law had been announced, and the man who will not hear that has no hope of salvation. But you and I this day not only have Moses and the prophets, but Christ and the apostles; and if a man will not repent from having heard the same, he would not do so though one should rise from the dead.

Sometimes the question is raised as to how long a man ought to repent. How long does it take him to fulfill this requirement? I think I can answer that correctly by stating that it takes just long enough for him to get the consent

of his mind, of his will power, that he is tired of sin and of his former ways, and that now he firmly resolves and coolly decides to turn from his evil way and face about toward the "city which hath foundations." Whatever time is required, therefore, to make this decision, is the answer to that query. The longest time of which we have any record was the case of Saul of Tarsus, due to the fact that three days and three nights passed before Ananias reached the character to be converted. We read in the Bible of where three thousand repented in one day; again, of the Philippian jailer, who heard the gospel, repented of his sins, and was baptized the same hour of the night. It is possible for all those in this splendid audience who believe the gospel with all the heart to repent of their sins this very hour and to further their obedience to the gospel of Christ. Remember that the Savior said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;" and that you may escape that condemnation, I insist that you accept the gospel call and be saved while time and opportunity are yours.

2-18-72

BAPTISM

Until this audience began to gather I had wondered whether or not the people would be interested in the old subject of baptism that has been discussed, debated, and argued for these hundreds of years. But I interpret your presence as an absolute manifestation of the interest that you have in this old theme. It is a Bible subject which every one recognizes must be answered, and the problems connected therewith must be solved by each individual. Just let me say to-night that while hundreds and thousands have lived and passed off the scene of action, every man and woman that has ever gone into the presence of God must give an account for the record made in his journey and for his disposition of this subject.

The importance of a theme like this can be no better expressed than by stating to you this fact—namely, that out of all the churches throughout the length and breadth of the land, no man can become a member of any of them, except the Quakers, without he subject himself to what that church is pleased to call "baptism." For that reason, therefore, if you ever expect to become united with any religious body and to be affiliated with any movement of that sort, this question must by you be settled in some way or other, and you cannot escape the responsibility by saying that it was settled for you by your parents when you were an infant, because it is left with you to determine as to whether or not you are going to be contented and satisfied with the act that took place concerning which you had no knowledge, no choice, or no decision.

I wish that I knew how to-night, in the very best way possible, to present this matter to you in its simplicity and in its genuineness that would carry with it real conviction and likewise the proper solution thereof. I want to serve notice now that I do not intend to argue the question. I am not to-night trying to convince you by any power of logic or reason as to what you ought to do in order to be

scripturally baptized; but I have in mind just to present to you the plain, simple statement of God's word, with practically no comments whatever, summing up just what is learned therefrom and holding it out to you as best I can, appealing to your intelligence as to the safety of your course, and then trying to get you to follow that which you believe to be taught in Holy Writ.

It has sometimes been said that before a person can understand what God teaches on the question of baptism, he has to be quite a scholar—that he must be familiar with some of the ancient and dead languages; and numbers of people excuse themselves from the responsibility on the ground that they know nothing of these languages, and, therefore, are helpless in the matter. I want to say to you candidly that I do not believe that a man has to know one word of Greek, not a particle of Hebrew, not one syllable of Latin, French, Spanish, or anything else other than our simple mother tongue, in order to understand God's teaching along this line.

I once read of an old gentleman, in some book, who had this suggestion. He said: "Sir, if I were troubled as to what it takes to constitute a valid act of baptism, I would cut loose from all things else and take the New Testament in hand, and in a quiet manner I would commence with the first chapter of Matthew and read very carefully, noting that word 'baptism' or some of the family thereof every time I found it; and then at the close I would try to decide, with God alone as my teacher, just what was the act commanded by him and to which I must submit."

Now, that has always struck me as being a very sensible and easy method of procedure, and, with that thought in mind, I want to make one other suggestion before I pass to the direct investigation. It is much easier to teach a man that is absolutely unacquainted with a thing—that has never formed any opinion or conception—than it is to eliminate wrong things that have entered into his mind. A partisan—a biased and prejudiced man—is wonderfully hard to set right, even though you present the truth as clear as the noonday sun.

Now, I ask of this audience, all of you, including your humble servant, let's do our best, at the beginning of this little talk, to get out of our minds any knowledge, any opinion, or any decision whatever of a partisan nature that we may have had respecting what it takes to constitute scriptural baptism. If possible, let's imagine that, in all of our days, we have never heard that word called, that it is a brand-new thing unto us, and that to it we are perfect and rank strangers; and, therefore, to-night, being careful not to be influenced by anything that will be an opinion on the subject, let's try to find for ourselves just what God says and draw conclusions based directly thereon.

If it is possible for us to do that, I think our survey of the Bible thought to-night will be helpful and profitable. Now, I do not mean in announcing to you that I propose to go through the entire New Testament, studying just what may be said regarding it, that I shall keep you here for a late hour; but with these scriptures readily and easily called to mind, I can soon glance over this matter and get therefrom the thought intended. Let it be understood, first, that baptism is strictly a New Testament subject, not being one time mentioned in the Old.

Commencing, therefore, with the first chapter of Matthew, we meet not a single time this word about which we are interested. Pass on to chapter 2 and read it through, and we have not come across this word in it. But when you open the Bible at chapter 3, you do not read far until you find a record of John the Baptist, having come preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying unto the people: "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. . . . Then went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about the Jordan; and they were baptized [now, that is the word for the first time—"baptized"] of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins." (A. R. V.)

Well, I have no idea on earth what that word means. Under the promise stated, that is the first time I ever saw it; and what have I learned about it? I have learned that there was a disposition on the part of the people of Jeru-

salem and Judea and the region round about that when John was preaching they went out unto him and were all baptized of him (whatever that may mean) in the river Jordan, and that they confessed their sins.

Now, what was the act that took place? I do not know, nor can any man living tell from that statement just what happened, and we have to learn that yet. But one thing I have learned from that—viz., that whatever the act may be, it took place in the river Jordan. Now, how do I know that? Because it is there in the Bible, and is what the Bible said, and not Hardeman's opinion nor theory nor comment. That is exactly what God's word said about it. That is what I believe and what I know thus far.

Well, again, the Book says that "they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins"—that is, they acknowledged their sinfulness. They did not profess that their sins had been forgiven already, but in the confession and acknowledgment of their sins they were baptized (whatever that means and whatever that word stands for) in the river Jordan. Thus two points are learned; and as I pass on to verse 11 of that same chapter, John said: "I indeed baptize you with water; . . . but he that cometh after me . . . shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." Now, what have you learned about that? No man that ever lived can read that verse and determine what the act was that is incorporated in that term, but here is what you do learn: that the element John used was not buttermilk, nor cider, nor any liquid of that sort. Water was the element. Of course you might gather that from the fact that he baptized in the Jordan River; but we started out to take it for what it says, not to interpolate nor inject any other word than that of God. It happened in the river Jordan. The people were confessing their sins. Water was the element with which or in which they were baptized.

But read right on, beginning with verse 13 of the same chapter: "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to

me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water." There is our word again. Now, that does not tell what happened. That just simply tells that Jesus came and demanded the act, and after the baptizing he came up out of the water. Now, brethren, do not jump at the conclusion that you know he was immersed. You don't know anything of the kind. That did not say so, and let's not be too radical or too quick to decide such matters, but just let God lead us. Gathering up, we have:

1. That baptism was in the river Jordan.
2. Persons that confessed their sins.
3. That water was the element.
4. After the baptism, the Savior came up out of the water. That is it. No opinion about that. No comment, no theory.

Now I pass to chapter 28 of this book, where we learn more in verse 19. The Savior said when he appeared to the twelve: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Now, what have we learned? Well, two or three things that I never had before. One of them is this: that it is to be a universal matter, unto all nations, and that it is to be done in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. With the conscious knowledge that it is done in the name of these and connected therewith, it must be rather a serious, solemn matter. Our interest, therefore, must be aroused to find out more and more respecting the same.

In Mark 1: 4, 5, John preached "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." Well, I had not learned about that. Now, what do we have? That it is "the baptism of repentance," belonging to and growing out of repentance, and that it is "for the remission of sins." But some one would ask: "What does 'for' mean?" That is not the point to-night. I am telling you just what the Bible says, not what it ought to have said. Now, where are we?

1. It happened in the river Jordan.
2. It occurred to those acknowledging their sins.
3. Water was the element.
4. After the baptism, Christ came up out of the water.
5. Teaching precedes it.
6. That it is universal.
7. That it is done in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; that it not only is a baptism of repentance, but it is "for the remission of sins." What constitutes the act? I have not learned. You could not tell from a single one of those scriptures just what baptism is.

And so let us pass on to Mark 16: 15, 16, where the Savior is reported in this connection to have said: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized [there is our word again] shall be saved." What have I learned about it? That faith precedes it and that salvation follows it. Now, let no man say: "I don't believe that." Let's not advertise our infidelity and skepticism too quickly. We are discussing what the Lord said about it, and not what he ought to have said. It is not theology or denominational opinion, but we are just talking about what it did say. Nobody can question that the Savior said: "He that believeth [so faith must precede the baptism, whatever that act may be, and as yet I do not know] and is baptized shall be saved." Now, I know that is what he said, and you know it; and knowing, we should accept what God says about it, and, I think, we should be content therewith.

We pass over that, and I come to Luke 3: 21, which is parallel with scriptures noted—nothing new especially to learn.

So I pass on to John 3: 23, where the record says John "was baptizing in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there." And some of my brethren say: "Well, that settles it." O, no; it does not! How much is "much water?" Do you know, brethren, that that is a relative term? A pitcherful of water is "much" compared with a thimbleful; a barrel is "much" compared with a quart.

Coming now to Acts 2: 38, we find that Peter said: "Re-

pent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." In this we learn not only that repentance precedes, but that the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit follow. But the precise act of what baptism is, is not here defined. In chapter 8 of the same book we learn that "when they [the Samaritans] believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Toward the close of the chapter we have the case of Philip and the eunuch, of whom it is said: "They went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." I must admit that this looks quite suspicious, but I would not conclude therefrom that immersion was necessarily the act performed. We have started out to learn from the Bible definitely just what the act implies. Going on through the book of Acts, we have the baptism of Saul, Cornelius, Lydia, the Philippian jailer, and others; but no new fact or item is learned.

Now, I pass to Rom. 6, with all of these things that we have learned about baptism, and I commence to read from verse 1. Paul says: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid [which means, "No, indeed"]. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?"

There are two new thoughts that come to us in this letter that we read to the church of God at Rome. What are they? (1) Baptized into Jesus Christ, (2) baptized into his death. There is where his blood was shed—in the death of Christ. I must come in contact, therefore, with the cleansing power of the blood of Christ, or else there is no remission of my sins.

Now, Paul said, and I take it that he knew more about it than any of us, that we are "baptized into his death." But

what is the act? Well, I haven't learned. But watch the next verse: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

My friends, do you know that that settles the question and throws light upon all those passages hitherto read?

Paul, what is the definite, the specific act in being baptized? Answer, in the language of Holy Writ and of inspiration: "We are buried." In what act? "In the act of baptism." There is a burial. Who said that? A greater than I, one that could not make a mistake—God's Spirit, guiding into all truth.

Well, I can understand now some other passages hitherto unknown. I can appreciate why it is that he went down into the water, because there could not be a burial without it. I can appreciate the relative term as to "much water," at least sufficient to constitute a burial. I can understand why it happened in the river Jordan or some place equivalent thereunto.

"Well," some one says, "that is strange, because when we bury folks in Tennessee, that is the end of them. That is not the way you do in the act of baptism."

My friends, if there were nothing further on the subject, in order to fulfill Holy Writ's demands, as a matter of fact, we would have to bury them and leave them so. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death." What kind of burial? "That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Baptism, therefore, not only contemplates, and the specific act not only embraces, the act of a burial, but connected therewith is the act of a resurrection, all of which throws light upon the fact that it is a form of the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ and typifies his burial and his resurrection.

In Col. 2: 12 Paul said: "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him." Thus you have the thought.

Now, will you help me gather these statements just from

the word of God? Here they are: (1) This thing that we call "baptism," about which we are trying to find out just from God's word, happened in the river Jordan. Mark you, no comment. I am not arguing as to what the language means; I am just telling this splendid company of intelligent people what the Bible says. (2) It was in the river Jordan. (3) People acknowledged or confessed their sins. (4) Water is the element used. (5) It is a baptism that is preceded by teaching. (6) It is preceded by faith. (7) It is preceded by repentance. (8) It is done in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (9) The reception of the Holy Spirit and salvation are promised afterwards. (10) In the act preparatory thereunto there is a going down into the water. (11) Then, after the act, there is a coming up out of the water. (12) And the act, definite and specific itself, is a burial, followed by a resurrection. And that, to every man that knows such is in the Bible and believes it, ought to settle the question, and to settle it once and for all.

I have never been to the Holy Land. If I should ever chance to go, I am sure I would be glad to visit the traditional spot where the Savior was crucified and the tomb in which his body lay while he himself went to the Hadean world. And after having done that, I would like to go and view the place along the river where Jesus came from Galilee and was baptized of John. I cannot place myself or be placed in the same sepulcher as was he and have the stone rolled before it; but I can duplicate that by walking down into the water and have it parted and the waves leap over my brow until for the time I am buried and hidden and secluded, as was my Savior, and then by the strong arm of a servant of God be raised, characteristic of the triumphant resurrection of the Son of God from the dead. Thus I can in form represent the very foundation upon which the Christian doctrine and the hope of everlasting bliss stand—viz., the death of Christ for our sins, his burial, and his glorious resurrection.

I want to submit to you that the tomb and the burial always stand as the mark between the two lives that men

live. At the close of this earthly life we take our friends out to the silent city and there bury them. There is the monument; there is the mound. What does it indicate? The end of physical life, the beginning of the life beyond. Just so in the life of a sinner. With his hands stained perhaps in the blood of his fellows, with crime, with vice, with wickedness and evil on every side, he leaves the life of sinful indulgence and all physical gratification; and when with the whole heart he believes in God's Son, when with a firm resolve he turns away from his sins, when he walks down into the water and there is buried and raised, the old life is ended. All now is blotted out, and, with the heart purified by faith, the life purified by repentance, and the state or relationship changed by baptism, he rises to walk in the new life under the leadership of Christ Jesus our Lord. And, hence, the burial indicates the close of the old life, and the resurrection, the beginning of the new life in Christ.

Let me submit to you, therefore, that if a man to-night wants really to follow the teaching of God's word, irrespective of all opinions and theories and ideas of men, if he will walk in the light of these passages thus repeated, do exactly as contemplated therein, there will never come the shadow of a doubt with reference to his having done the will of the Lord Jesus Christ while here upon earth he dwells.

But, before I close, there might be some interest in two or three other statements. Some one says: "Now, Brother Hardeman, I would just like to know a little about a verse or two that mention sprinkling—for instance, Isa. 52: 15, where the prophet said, respecting the Christ, whose form and whose outline and whose character had been pictured: 'So shall he sprinkle many nations.'" Suffice it to say for the present that with every scholar and every commentary and every translation of the Bible, in the margin and in the text of many, the word "sprinkle" is changed unto the word "astonish" or "startle" or "made to wonder at." Hence, the passage refers not in the least unto any sort of an act of obedience to God or unto Christ.

But I have had people remind me of the fact that the prophet predicted that "clean water" should be sprinkled upon the people and they should be cleansed from all their filthiness and from their idols. Well, I happen to know that passage—Ezek. 36: 25. I want to talk to you about it just for a moment. In the year 587 B.C. the people of Israel were carried away into Babylonian captivity, there to stay for fifty-one years, seventy in all. This began back in 606 B.C., and the first nineteen years of the captivity were spent at Jerusalem under Babylonian dominion. When they were thus carried away into the far-distant land, Ezekiel, being one of the number, raised his voice and made this prediction: that by and by the time will come when God will gather his people, the Jews, out from among the heathen, and he will bring them back into their own land. This pointed down to the time 536 B.C., when, under the decree of Cyrus and under the leadership of Zerubbabel, Nehemiah, and others, they would come back and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Now, in view of the fact that they had mixed and mingled with the defilement and the corruption and the idolatry of a foreign world, they will be rendered impure. God said, through Ezekiel, that when he had thus brought them back, "then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh."

Now, some good people, blinded and deluded beyond the shadow of a doubt, fancy that perchance that refers to baptism. Well, if it did, it would be the strongest passage in the Bible as to the design of the act. Note: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you." And what will happen? "And ye shall be clean." When? After the sprinkling. But that does not fit modern theology. It has the person cleansed before the sprinkling. What happens? "I will take away the stony heart, I will give you a new spirit, and I will give you a new heart." When? After the baptizing or after the sprinkling.

But, as a matter of fact, that refers no more unto the act of baptism than it does to the coming primary election—absolutely not. It took place about fifty years after the prophet had thus proclaimed it.

I want, cautiously and carefully, not beside myself the least bit, perfectly cool and calm, perfectly deliberate, to state unto this magnificent audience this one thing. I want you to get it and then begin your search. Hear it: Water, and nothing but water, like this down here in the Cumberland River, like that you draw from your hydrant, like that you get out of the pool and in the streams—water, and nothing but water, was never sprinkled upon any person, people, place, or thing by God's authority since time began. I know that that statement is the truth. Water, as we find it and use it, was never sprinkled upon anything for any purpose in all the wide, wide world.

"Why," some one says, "Brother Hardeman, art thou beside thyself?" O, no! What was the clean water spoken of by Ezekiel? If you will go back home and turn to Num. 19, you will find exactly the characteristic thereof. A red heifer was burned, together with her flesh, her skin, her dung, her all, into which cedar wood and hyssop and scarlet had been put; and when the ashes thereof had accumulated and had been gathered up, it is called in God's book "the water of cleansing," "the water of separation," "the water of purification;" and it was the law of Moses that every time they had come in contact, for instance, with a dead body, or every time they had come in contact with or touched a man that had been an attendant in a sick room, that man was by the Jew considered unclean. Thus in the Babylonian captivity they had been corrupted and defiled, and hence Ezekiel said: "When I bring you back to your own land, I will cleanse you from all the defilement of the Babylonian world." How, Ezekiel, will you do it? "I will sprinkle this water of separation, the water of purification, this clean water, upon you; and, as a result, you shall be cleansed."

Let me state to you this: As said in the outset, this is a

question that has been discussed and agitated and argued all over the land, and do you know one thing—that the act of immersion has never been debated or in question? Where is the man that would take the negative of the proposition that the Bible teaches that immersion in water, to a scriptural subject, is baptism? Do you know that none will deny that? That is not the thing that has been in doubt. The question has been as to whether or not something else will do as well. It is a question of whether or not you can substitute. All the world that believes in baptism at all, and that means everybody, except the Quakers—all of them suggest that immersion is the genuine article.

You have heard the old illustration, but it illustrates, and I want to close this thought with its presentation. Suppose I owed some man ten dollars, and I admit the obligation and the indebtedness and say: "Sir, after so long a time I am ready to settle my account, and I have here three ten-dollar bills [I said this is just illustrative; I don't have anything of the kind; but here are, say, three ten-dollar bills], and I want to pay you and get a receipt in full of all demands. But before I make the offer and the tender, frankness and candor demand of me to say that here is a ten-dollar bill that you may have in payment for that debt. Numbers of people will accept it and say that they would just as soon have it as any ten-dollar bill on earth; but the truth demands that I say that occasionally you will come across a man that will cry 'counterfeit,' and he won't have it, and demand something else. But you can take it if you want to. All right. Now, here is a second ten-dollar bill that numbers and numbers of people accept readily, that you will never have a question about with many people; but truth demands that I say to you in advance that you will meet up with men here and there that will not accept it, and it cannot be passed as a legal tender. But you may have it if you will. Now, here is the other ten-dollar bill that no man has ever questioned. It is good here and everywhere. Nobody ever doubts it or questions it."

I think I know humanity well enough to know that you would say, no matter whether you are a Democrat or a Republican: "I believe you can just give me that one about which there is no question, because I don't want to have to be bothered by some fellow's questioning or coming back on me about that ten-dollar bill. Just give me the real, genuine article, and that will settle it." Well, I think that is good judgment.

My friends, will you make the application? There are three things to-night that you can have for baptism. You can accept sprinkling, and many people will tell you they would just as lief have it as anything else; but you will meet up with folks that are out of the asylum and not runaways that will tell you: "I cannot accept that; I think it is a substitute." But you may take it if you wish. A man has that right.

Then here is pouring, and a great many people would just as lief have that as anything else; but there are folks that even question that. Then what?

Friends, seriously, here is the act of going down into the water, of there being buried beneath the liquid wave, of rising to walk in newness of life. Now, you have the privilege of that; and let it be said that whether you go to Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, or anywhere in all the world, nobody will ever dare question the genuineness of the act.

Why not, in view of eternity, not as a theory, not as a partisan spirit—why not accept that about which there is no question? Why be disturbed and ever in doubt as to whether or not I have been scripturally baptized? It is a simple matter. Why not settle it once for all? Put that behind you, and, upon the authority of God's word, start out toward the practice of the principles of that religion that is pure and undefiled. Unto all the taught, therefore, of the audience, unto those that believe the gospel, unto those that repent of their sins and publicly confess their faith in the Christ, that will obey from the heart that form of doctrine delivered, I bid you come while we sing the splendid hymn selected, "Why do you wait?" Why not make settlement of the matter just now, while all is well?

These steps will induct you into the family of God. This process will make you a Christian, nothing else. It will make you a member of the church that you read about in the Bible; and if you are faithful unto death, by and by Heaven's angels, unseen perchance, but real, will camp round about you and bear your spirit home to nestle in the bosom of the love of God while eternity rolls her endless ages on.

WHAT CHURCH TO JOIN?

I cannot but be delighted at the presence of such a splendid company, manifesting thereby your continued and genuine interest, as I believe, in those matters that are here discussed from time to time. I am duly appreciative, I trust, of the interest that you thus show. The intelligent and courteous hearing that you give serves as a great inspiration unto me in trying to present what I believe to be the truth of the Bible.

I have for study to-night a matter about which the world has varied opinions, and I am not unconscious of the fact that, in the presentation of the theme, things may be stated contrary to what you have hitherto believed. All I ask of you is this: that you consider very carefully and thoughtfully, and in harmony with the Scriptures, the things I shall say, weigh them well, and accept only that part thereof that you know to be taught in the word of God. Because we may differ regarding these matters, I pledge you that I shall think none the less of you; and wherever I chance to go contrary to your opinions, I do so with no disposition to wound your feelings or disrespectfully refer to you in any way whatsoever. I think it a compliment to all of us that we have our individuality and are willing to discuss and think together, and then to act upon the very best judgment possible.

I want to talk to you about the church of the Bible, and I believe that in the announcement of it I shall put it in this form: "What church ought a man to join?"

I believe every person that is not an atheist nor infidel expects really before he dies and goes hence to become a member of some organization known as a church. I can hardly think of a man who claims to believe the Bible going through life resolved never to give a question of this kind favorable consideration. Why is it that such a small per cent of the human family are church members? I may not know the full answer thereto, but I believe the reason is

that the world has not yet decided just what church a man ought to affiliate with and with which one he ought to be united.

Now, in this country of ours, according to the last statistics I noticed, there are one hundred sixty and four organizations, claiming to be churches, beckoning and begging for membership. Now, we have a wonderful opportunity—if, indeed, you could call it such—in picking out from this number which one we ought to join; but numbers of men that are not biased nor prejudiced can hardly decide just which one to select. For instance, a man goes to this organization over here, and he finds plenty of good people in it. Nobody can question that many splendid things are taught; but, of course, some things he cannot indorse; and he passes to the next. There he finds equally good people, a great many good things therein taught, but some objectionable features. Thus he makes the rounds; and when he gets through, I think it would take a wiser than Solomon to analyze and discriminate and pick out just the one that really ought to enlist his deepest concern.

Now, will you think it strange of me to make this suggestion? And I do not speak beside myself to-night or without having thought the matter out as to what to say; but what would you think if I were to advise you that have favored me so kindly to join all of the churches within reach? Just think on that for a moment.

Where did the man get it into his head that he ought to join just one church? You cannot say that this is not the way we act, for I have found men universally to the contrary. There are various clubs and organizations of a social and business nature in the city of Nashville. Do you think it possible to find some one of your best citizens that is a member of more than one club at the same time? I do not think such would be hard to find. I almost guarantee, ladies, that you have husbands that are members of the Masonic Lodge, and also members of the Odd Fellows' Lodge, and also members of the Pythian Lodge, and then they join the Woodmen of the World. Why, nobody thinks anything about it. Now, what made them do that? Well,

the Masonic Fraternity, according to what information I have regarding it, represents certain principles which a man believes to be good. He goes and identifies himself therewith. Then he recognizes that the Odd Fellows' Lodge has some things in it that maybe the Masonic Lodge does not offer; and, notwithstanding the fact that he has already joined the Masons, he does not hesitate to go and join the Odd Fellows.

Well, as a matter of fact, upon the basis that both of these lodges are good, and I am not here to question that, would it not follow that the man who has joined both of them is better than the man who has never joined either or stopped with just one of them? If that result does not follow, I think I would make a motion to disband both of them. Then here is the Pythian Lodge that affords many things, really splendid things, that are not found in the others. Well, is not this man that joins both or all of them a better man than he who joins just one? Why, the former has all the latter has, and more besides. And so he joins so many lodges that his wife cannot have his company a single night in the week.

Well, now, why not do the churches that way? Here is a fine religious organization. Some of my friends are in it. There are many good things about it—things I like; let me go and join it. Over here is another one with equally as good people in it, friends just as dear as those in the former, and some things in this one that you cannot get in that—things that I like. Why not let me join this in addition? Would I not be a better man than if I stopped at just the first one? Where will you draw the line? I will tell you. As a matter of fact, if I were in the joining business, I would join some eight or ten or a dozen or maybe twenty of the religious institutions of the land; and I think in the justification thereof I could hold my own and maintain all consistency in so doing.

I do not hesitate to join any of the different insurance companies and take out a policy from this one. Notwithstanding that I have done that, it does not keep me from taking out another thousand dollars in a second company,

and likewise in a third. That is the way we do about everything else on earth except the church; and so I am going to suggest to you to-night, if you are going to join any church at all, I think honestly I would throw the gate open; I would join quite a number on the ground that there are good people in them and that they teach good things, and that you get in one things you cannot get in the others. But you notice that my suggestion along that line was prefaced by a conditional clause. Now, get this: I never have—mark it—I don't expect to to-night, and so long as God lets me live on earth I never expect to advise or ask any man to join any church under the shining stars above us. Coming from a man that sometimes tries to preach, that may seem to you remarkably strange. I would say to you, ladies and gentlemen, I have never joined any single, solitary church in all my life. Now, are you thinking: "If I had known that, I would not have come to hear you preach?" Do you think that I mean to say by that that I do not claim to be a member of the church? If so, you are wrong in that presumption. I want to make you this statement, just plainly and in a very practical manner: Do you, ladies and gentlemen, honestly and thoughtfully—do you know that neither God nor Christ nor the Holy Spirit nor any inspired man ever did ask or suggest or admonish anybody to join the church since Adam was created? Well, some one says: "That is a radical statement." I know it is. In view of the way I was reared, it is a wonderfully radical statement. The question is: "Is it so?" That is the one point of interest to you now. Is that statement the fact in the case? Do you know right now, any of you, of a single passage of scripture in all the Bible to which you can turn and find the expression, "Join the church?" Where is it? It is not in Genesis, nor in Exodus, nor in Leviticus, nor in Numbers, nor in Joshua, nor in Judges, nor in Ruth, nor in Samuel, nor in First and Second Kings, nor throughout the entire thirty and nine volumes or books of the Old Testament. Well, you cannot find it in Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, nor in any book on down to Revelation. Where is it?

Now, watch the suggestion I am making. Do you know of a single passage in all the Bible to which you can turn when you get back home and find anything ever said about joining a church? Why, my friends, where I was reared, on the western side of the Tennessee River, there were two expressions that were just as near and as sacred to me as a boy as any other two in all my vocabulary. Here they are: I was taught early in life that I ought to "get religion;" and then, after that, my friends and those who really loved me and were interested in me said that, in addition to "getting religion," I ought to "join some church." Well, I took that as a matter of fact, and excused myself on the ground of my indifference and unconcernedness. But I have found out, and I now thoroughly believe, that in all the Bible neither one of these expressions is to be found. They originated in the minds of uninspired men. The Holy Spirit never directed the pen to make a declaration nor to record a statement like unto either of these.

Now, these things being true, and my word for it until you have had time to search and investigate, I would not advise you to join any church. Just to be plain and frank about it, it is none of men's business to be joining religious organizations—that is to say, the word of God does not authorize, command, or demand such an act on our part.

But what is the church? Maybe that all the time I have been talking we are confused because we are not a unit in thought as to the matter just discussed. When I talk about the church, I am not talking about a material building that is more properly styled, in the country, the "meetinghouse." I really think that is what it is. It was purely an accident that I first learned the truth about that. Back where I was reared we called them "meetinghouses." When I went to the little town in which I have lived since, some of my people said I ought not to style these buildings such, but that I must talk about the "church" up yonder at the corner of the streets; and I did, not knowing any better. I did just what they recommended, but I have gone back very largely unto my first habit along that line. I pass along in your city and look at the splendid houses, repre-

sentative, as they are, of immense sums of money, beautiful, commodious, and attractive, and I do not think they are churches. I do not believe there is quite enough money in the city of Nashville and enough material in the great State of Tennessee out of which men can erect a church of God.

The church is a building all right enough, but it is not made of material things. It is a building composed of men and women that have been born again, that have passed out of darkness into the light of the Son of God.

So let's get it out of our minds that any of the fine structures that men can erect constitute a church, and it is strange that that idea has always been on the earth. When Paul went to the city of Athens and stood on Mars' Hill, in condemnation of their manner of worship (Acts 17: 24), he said: "Howbeit, the Most High God does not dwell in temples made by the hands of men." O, they had their splendid structures there, very fine buildings, representing immense sums of money, and Paul said: "Gentlemen, you are wrong about it. The God of heaven, the God that made the earth and the sea and the things therein—that God does not dwell in temples made by men's hands." And, hence, let's eliminate the idea that the church we read about in the Bible is any kind of a material building—of stone, brick, or marble.

Well, what is the church? I want to suggest to you this as a definition thereof: The church of the Bible is that spiritual realm over which Jesus Christ reigns as head and in which the Holy Spirit dwells. It is the body of Christ, composed of members that have been born again, that have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Hence, Paul said, in Eph. 1: 22, 23, that God "hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." And, again, in Col. 1: 18, Paul said: "And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preëminence."

So, then, the church of God, according to the direct statement of the word of God, is none other than the body of Christ. Jesus, the Christ, the head; Christian men and women as the members thereof; the Holy Spirit dwelling within, giving life, strength, vitality, and power thereunto.

Now, I have in mind to suggest another thing for your consideration and study. My friends, the church of the Bible is used only in two senses—one of them a universal application, and the second in its reference to local assemblies. It has been said by some who have taken the time to count it that the word is found one hundred and ten times in the New Testament; that of the one hundred and ten times, eighteen times it refers to the redeemed in the aggregate—to that body composed of all the Christian people everywhere—and ninety-two times referring to local congregations. I give you just a sample of these two ways. For instance, in Matt. 16: 18 Christ said: "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." I think, in common with you, that he was referring unto that organization in its general sense, embracing and embodying all of the redeemed and all of the ransomed and saved of the earth. Again (Eph. 5: 25): "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." Now, which one was that? What church was it that Christ loved, and which one was it for which he died? The answer: The church of God in the universal sense. As but illustrative of the other, I have only to call your attention to Paul's and others' letters unto the church—for instance, the church at Rome, Corinth, Sardis, Pergamos, Philadelphia, Thyatira, Ephesus, etc.—not that they are different in theory, practice, or manner of worship, but purely in geography and location.

Well, this thought then follows, and ought to be of interest to every living soul (mark it): Is the church of the Bible a denomination? I would have you think candidly, unprejudiced and unbiased in mind, as you thus contemplate. I repeat it: Is the church about which you read in the Bible, the church for which Christ gave his blood, the

church of which Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church"—is that a denomination? If so, which one? Out of the one hundred and sixty-four, which one is Christ talking about? Why, as a matter of fact, my friends, for fifteen hundred years after the Son of God died a felon's death on the cross there was not a denomination known in all the annals of history. Our denominationalism is of modern origin. It does not so much as belong to the study of ancient history, but to medieval and modern; and, as a matter of fact, I believe, in common with you, that when we read the Bible in the privacy of our homes and in the anxiety of our souls to learn God's will—when we read about the church there, I doubt if any of us then have in mind that we are reading about some denomination. The fact is that out of the one hundred and sixty-four that are mentioned in our government records, there is not a shadow of a record of any of them in the word of God.

Why, of course, when you go to find out how many denominations there are on the earth, you don't need the Bible; you need the Federal Authorities' Report; for you can take the Bible and memorize it from lid to lid, and you would be no wiser about denominations than at the beginning. Why? Because the Bible says not a word about them.

Will you help me try to differentiate and distinguish between a denomination and this organization spoken of in the Bible?

Now, a denomination—what is it? I think the following will prove true: A denomination is a religious organization larger than any local church on earth and yet smaller than all the Christian people on earth. Think of the statement thus made. What is a denomination? It is a religious organization larger than a local church, smaller than the redeemed in the aggregate. Therefore it comes in between, separate and distinct from, the church of the Bible at both ends of the line. How is the church used? It is either a local congregation or it embraces all Christians. Now, a denomination stands between these, and, there-

fore, it is a thing unheard of and unknown in the Bible; and I say that cautiously, respectfully, and yet firmly.

Well, then, does a man have to become a member of a denomination in order to be saved? Why, there is not a man on earth that would tell you he does. Get it! If I can, therefore, be saved from sin and be saved in heaven without becoming a member of a denomination, then what reason is there upon the earth for the existence of a thing that is admittedly nonessential to the salvation of the souls of men?

"Well," says one, "try the church in that line. Can a man be saved and not become a member of the church?" Now, I appreciate the fact that there are those to the contrary; but let me say it: No man yet, under the banner of Christ, under the reign of Jesus Christ as King, has ever been saved except by virtue of the fact that he has become a member of the church of the Bible. Salvation is not in the devil's territory. Salvation is not in the kingdom of His Satanic Majesty, but salvation is in God's family, and there are just the two.

Now, I refer to a principle stated a few days ago with reference to God's immutable law. I said that God located the life of a fish and put that location in water; and if a fish ever enjoys that kind of life, it must get into that realm where God saw fit to designate and locate it. Just so has God Almighty located the life of a Christian. Where has he located salvation? Mark the idea. Just two places, just two kingdoms—the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the devil. Where are God's children? They are inside of God's family. It is not complimentary for you to suggest that God has children outside of the family. That is not even complimentary to say regarding men. God's children—Christians, the saved, the redeemed—are in the family of God, which is the church of God, "the pillar and ground of the truth."

Now, I have this to ask: Can a man become a member of the church of the Bible and yet not be a member of any denomination? You say: "Yes, for Jesus Christ certainly did not establish an institution and then leave it impossi-

ble for men to become identified therewith." Granting that statement, you have exactly the conception that is in the mind of your humble servant—namely, I want to stand a member of the church about which you read in the New Testament, and at the same time not a member of any denomination under high heaven.

The Corinthians thus stood. Nobody had ever been to Corinth preaching the gospel except Paul, and he thus established the church by the proclamation of the gospel. The people accepted the simple terms thereof; and when he went away, he saw fit to write unto that same body, and here is the way he began (1 Cor. 1: 1): "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes, our brother, unto the *church of God* which is at Corinth." What denomination was it? Absolutely none. He said to them in 1 Cor. 12: 27: "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." The body is the church. (Col. 1: 18.) I want you to think of what that statement, or those statements, would imply for the world.

There are numbers and numbers of professed Christians in the city of Nashville, a city known far and near for its schools and churches; and yet this city, like all others, is cursed—by what? By religious division, by controversy, by denominational rivalry, each denomination trying to outstrip and to outshine every other denomination within the corporate limits.

What would the teaching of the Bible do for Nashville? It would cause the people, all of us, to drop every kind of an organization under heaven of a religious nature except the one talked of and spoken of in the Bible. Well, what about it? Not a single, solitary man would have to give up or sacrifice a single principle or a matter of faith in so doing; and if you, as our capital city, unto which the State looks with pride and with pleasure, could present a solid phalanx and a combined front, the influence thereof would spread from the rivers to the ends of the earth. We would plant ourselves upon God's Book, that and that alone. We would be members only of the church for which Christ died. We would have no discriminating terms; we would not be

divided, but we would be joined together, heart to heart, hand in hand, while infidelity, skepticism, and all things antagonistic to the forward march of Christ would fly away like mist before the morning sunlight. We would have God's word as the creed, as the discipline, as the confession of faith. We would talk about God's church, not mine. I do not have a church and never expect to. Jesus Christ said: "Upon this rock I will build mine." If you have one, it is prima facie evidence that it is not the one spoken of in the Bible, because that one is not yours. And, hence, when you go around talking about "my church," you publicly—however, you may not intend to do it; but that is a public advertisement that yours is different from the one in the New Testament, because that is not yours. I beg to state to you that it is not mine; and, therefore, there can be no partisan spirit, there can be no littleness, nor narrowness, nor sectarian ties. Why, it is not ours. It belongs to Him who died and shed his blood for the purchase thereof.

The church of the New Testament has different appellations by which it is known. When I speak of it collectively, it is styled the "church of the first-born." Jesus Christ, then, being the first-born, it would be the equivalent of saying the "church of Christ." It is styled "house of God," "God's building," "God's temple." It is thus called in a collective sense. Further, referring to different congregations, it is called the "churches of Christ." All of these names are Bible names, and none of them can be questioned nor correctly criticized. But when you put over the door some other name, then you advertise, as it occurs to me personally, a lack of due regard for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I can look back to-night more than twenty years and remember, I think very distinctly, the two statements that first attracted my attention toward Christianity. I heard a man preach, whose name would be very familiar to you all, who said this: "We propose to call Bible things by Bible names." As a schoolboy, I thought that sounded sensible. If it is a Bible institution, if it is a Bible thing,

and God has named it, then let's all continue to call Bible things by Bible names.

The second statement that followed (and I can now see the man standing and announcing it) was this: "We propose to speak where the Bible speaks and to be silent where God's word is silent. We propose to regard the authority of the Bible, and not to presume to go by its silence." I owe my first listening ear and receptive heart toward Christianity, so far as I recall, unto the emphasis and the force and the weight of those two statements. For twenty years, therefore, I have been trying to tell that same thing, and have never found reason or right to change the announcement or the policy embraced therein.

"Has God an institution on earth?" "Yes, sir." "What is the name of it?" He didn't call it the "Masonic Fraternity," with all due respect unto that body; he didn't style it the "Democratic Organization," with equal deference to the feelings of all Democrats. What did God call it? He called it the "church of the first-born." He called it the "household of faith." He called it the "church of Christ," if you please. "On this rock I will build *my church*." He called it the "church of God." I am perfectly content to strike hands with any man that will say: "On that we stand together. We will not let some name unknown to the Bible come in to divide us."

Well, with reference to the individual. There are different names for them. Sometimes the Bible calls the individuals "saints;" sometimes, "disciples;" sometimes, "brethren;" sometimes "Christians." It just depends on what particular phase you want to place the emphasis as to what we should be called. If you have reference to the fact that we are students and pupils, then it is right to speak of the members as "disciples," because that is what the word means; if you have reference to the purity and the sanctity thereof, then we ought to speak of each other as "saints." If you refer to our respective relationships one with another, then what? It is right to speak of us then as "brethren." But if you allude to our relationship unto our federal head, unto "Him from whom all

blessings flow," then our proper name is "Christian"—a name which carries with it the honor and respect unto Him who is the Head over the body of which we are a part.

But I stated to you at the beginning that I had never joined a church in all my life. I stated to you, further, that I have never asked other people to do so, and only in an accommodative manner do I ever talk about joining the church.

Are you wondering how on earth that I came to be a member of it? Is it a fact that a man cannot be a member of a thing unless he joins it? Well, I think not. Bear with me just a minute. I am a member of the Dr. J. B. Hardeman family, of McNairy County, Tenn. I have been a member of it all these years. Nobody that knows my parents and that knows me, by virtue of the striking relationship and distinction, has ever questioned or challenged a statement of that kind. Wherever I go and say that I am a member of the Hardeman family, I have never found the man yet so unkind as to even question it or raise a doubt. Well, some one says: "I accept that as a fact." All right. I am a member of it. Let me tell you: I have been a member of that family for more than forty years. God being my helper, I speak the truth; I never did join it in my life. Now, there is one thing that never did happen at my father's home. There were eight of us children. He never did pretend or presume to open the doors of the Hardeman family and let us children join. Maybe he should have done it, but he didn't.

Now, I give the question back to you, to all of you—the Smiths and the Joneses: Did you ever join the Smith family? You say: "No, I don't believe I did." "Are you a member of it?" "Yes, sir." "How came you to be a member?"

Now, friends, the beauty about all of that is its absolute simplicity. Why, listen: I was born into the Hardeman family, and did not have to join it; and the very minute, the very second, the very ten-thousandth part of a second that I opened my eyes in physical birth, I was then and

there a member of the Hardeman family, by virtue of the fact that I was born into it.

Well, just the same way I claim to be a member of Christ's family. I claim to be a member of the household of faith, of the church of the first-born. I didn't join it. "How came you in it?" I was born into it. I was born of water and of the Spirit, as the Savior said; and the very ten-thousandth part of a second that I opened my eyes, having been born again—born from above, born of water and of the Spirit—that minute I was a member of the church of Christ, the pillar and ground of the truth. And with that, God would have me rest my case. No joining about it. It is man's duty to hear the gospel and believe the gospel, to repent of all sins and publicly confess his faith in the Christ, to be buried with the Lord in baptism, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and that will make any man on earth that does it with an open, honest, earnest heart—it will make him a child of God and a member of the New Testament church at the very same time.

I come, therefore, again, my time having been exhausted, to ask: Do you want to stand to-night a member of God's family? Do you want to be initiated into that splendid institution over which Christ reigns as head and has authority? If so, I beg of you that while we sing the song you submit to Heaven's terms, be born again, and God will translate you out of darkness into the light of the kingdom of God and of Christ. Let us together stand and sing, and won't you come while the opportunity is afforded?

RECONCILIATION

I want to discuss with you to-night the subject of reconciliation, a basis for which is found in 2 Cor. 5: 18-20, where Paul said: "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

In the announcement of a theme like this, I am sure that all present appreciate the importance of our being reconciled unto God. Before I further pass I want to determine the definition or meaning of the term thus proposed.

"Reconciliation" is a compound word, composed of the little prefix R-E, "re," which simply means "again." The latter part of it, "conciliation," is from the word that means "to make friends." Hence, the word "reconciliation" means nothing more nor less than the *making of friends again.* But that implies, of course, that once the parties under consideration were united; that they were harmonious and in perfect accord; that something or other has come to pass that has alienated and separated them the one from the other. This being true, reconciliation may be possible and in order.

I want to try to illustrate that thought by two men who, perhaps, have formerly been friends and neighbors, who have walked together harmoniously along the pathway of life; but in the course of time something or other has come to pass, and friendship no longer exists, such as hitherto bound them together. They have been broken asunder, and they have become enemies and march in different directions the one from the other. Maybe the two gentlemen thus presented are of equal standing with reference to their intellect, social relationships, and other conditions; or it

may be that one of them is quite the superior of the other; or it is possible that one of them is absolutely innocent of any wrong and the other wholly guilty. Now, instead of going into the courts and having a long-drawn-out lawsuit, sometimes men have coolness enough to decide upon the arbitration of their differences and the settling of the matter outside of the court by means of a mediator, or some one to act as a middleman, unto whom their respective cases may be told and his judgment and decision in the matter be made final.

Now, it is not every person that can serve in the capacity of a mediator. In the first place, if the parties concerned are of equal footing, it is rather easy to find a man suitable for the place; but if one be superior to the other, then the selection becomes more difficult; and if one party is wholly in error and the other innocent, I am not certain but that the task of selecting is even greater still.

So, then, as a matter of fact, there are some requisites and demands that must be characteristic of him who would serve in the capacity thus mentioned. In the first place, I submit to you that the mediator must not be a party to the difference under consideration. In the second place, such a person must be adapted to both parties. He must be able to march up and feel on equal footing with the superior, and must be able to assimilate himself and stand on a parallel with the character that is the inferior.

Having these requisites, he is still not prepared. Suppose a man thus suggested be a kinsman of one and not related to the other. Let all things else be said of him in his favor, that one fact will disqualify him to act as mediator, for the man to whom he is not related would have a right and a reason to suggest that, however things may be, by virtue of the fact that he is related to the other party, his verdict will very likely be biased.

The demand or requisite No. 3 is that the party stand equal with reference to those of the controversy, equally related, both by blood and by association.

But you have all of those requirements—first, that he is not a party to the conflict or difference; second, he can

approach both parties; third, he is equally related to both of them. There is another thing absolutely necessary for him to have, and that is, he must become acquainted with all of the facts and details that led up to the separation and alienation; for unless a man know about those things, he is unprepared to render a verdict and give a decision characterized by anything like justice or fairness.

Now, with those things peculiarly true of the mediator, when he honestly and sincerely forms the very best judgment and renders a verdict, it is obligatory upon both parties to accept the same. For either to refuse this is but an insult to the mediator. He can do nothing further but turn away offended because of the fact that he has done his best; and when rejected, there remains nothing else to do but for the parties to fight it out the best they can and take whatever consequences may come.

With that simple illustration before you, I want to introduce to you to-night the parties that are connected with this matter of reconciliation—namely, God and man. Thus they stand. It is a case, ladies and gentlemen, of a superior and an inferior. It is a case of an innocent party and a guilty party. It is a case that implies that once they were together, on good terms, associated harmoniously and of one accord; but as time rolled on, for some reason or other, the cords of friendship that hitherto bound them were broken. They are alienated and parted one from the other, and thus the matter stands.

Now, as a matter of fact, there needs to be a mediator—one to stand between and try to bring about a readjustment or reconciliation of the parties thus mentioned.

But I submit to you that it is not amiss to ask about the responsibility connected with this situation. Is God to blame for the difference that has come about in the world? What did he do the result of which needs to be reconciled and made right to-night? On the other hand, what has man done? And I think I do not have to argue, but that all of us agree, that the human family, our original federal head, was wholly to blame, in that, with eyes wide open, not deceived, not blinded nor deluded, he deliberately walked

across God's law, knowingly so, and violated Heaven's order and Jehovah's command. And, as a result, in order that the law might be upheld and the dignity thereof preserved, the ties that hitherto bound were now severed. Hence, Isaiah (59: 1, 2) said: "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."

Therefore the responsibility rests upon man; and I just submit to you that if there be a reconciliation brought about, it must be on the part of the character that is responsible for the separation. That leads me to make emphatic now and stress as much as I possibly can the idea that the direction of reconciliation, that the trend and movement thereof, must be a movement on the part of man toward God, and not on the part of God toward man. Let me say to you that there is not a single passage bearing on the subject in all the Bible but that declares that the reconciliation is to be brought about on the part of man unto God, and never God to man.

The very text of the evening is suggestive of that. Hear it again: "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ." What doing? "Reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

I would not stop to emphasize that but for the fact that there are those who have deliberately written down in their articles of faith, to which numbers of good people have subscribed, doctrines the reverse of that told in Holy Writ. For instance, one very popular statement in the creeds of uninspired men is that Jesus Christ was begotten of God, born of the Virgin Mary, lived upon the earth for about a third of a century, suffered, bled, and died. What for? Answer: "That he might reconcile his Father unto us."

I want to say to you, ladies and gentlemen, that two the-

ories were never more opposite and antagonistic to each other than the statement found in the creeds and that found in the word of God. God says, "Reconcile men to God;" the creed says, "Reconcile God to man;" and it is left as a matter for our decision as to which one we want. Now, I never wrote either one of them; and should anybody want to find fault, he need not come to me, but either go to the Bible or the makers of the creeds. One thing I do know is that they are exactly opposite the one from the other; and as for me and mine, I will take what God said and discard the creeds of uninspired men. I cannot afford to do otherwise.

Be it remembered, then, that the process of reconciliation is a movement on the part of man toward God. Remember that Jehovah has provided, the Christ has executed, the Holy Spirit has revealed, the church is anxious and inviting, "all things are ready," and it depends now wholly upon whether or not man will submit to Heaven's terms and be reconciled to God.

Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, not God; we persuade men, not Christ; we persuade men, not the Holy Spirit. Why? Because God is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Man wandered away and man must return, and hence the labor of gospel teachers is to persuade their fellows to be reconciled unto God.

Paul said: "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

But who can serve to-night as a mediator between God and man? Can humanity? Can some man? Well, look at the conditions. Weigh the matter and see. Man cannot serve as a mediator on the ground that he is a party to the difficulty. Can an angel? O, no! On the ground that an angel is not equal to God and, therefore, cannot approach him on equal footing. An angel cannot descend to the level of man. Hence, that cannot be.

Paul said in 1 Tim. 2: 5: "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Now, I submit to you Jesus the Christ as the one character

who proposes to become the mediator between us and Him from whom all blessings must forever flow. Question: Is Jesus Christ suited? Is he adapted? Does he possess the requisites? As stated at the beginning, how does he stand with reference to both parties? He is not a party to the difficulty, neither on Heaven's side nor on man's side. Thus he fulfills one of the requisites demanded.

How does Christ stand with reference to the possibility of approach unto both parties? In Phil. 2: 5-9 Paul says: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." As Jesus Christ is the equal of God, it would be no conceit whatsoever for him to stand on a perfect parallel and approach the Father, commensurate with divine authority. On the other hand, Jesus Christ came down, assimilated himself with men to be on equal footing with those who travel over the bosom of the earth.

What about kinship? Now, if Jesus Christ were wholly divine, I think the world could well say: "Lord, although you may be honest, upright, and sincere, yet when you come to the plane of eternal judgment and there render the account, by virtue of the fact that you are akin to God and not akin to man, your judgment will be biased and necessarily prejudiced." Hence, I can appreciate the fact that Jesus Christ is not wholly divine. On the other hand, if he were wholly human, I think it not amiss to suggest that Jehovah might not have justice rendered as a result of that relationship; and, therefore, Jesus Christ stands that unique character in the midst of the ages. He reaches up with one hand and says, "God is my Father;" and with the other he reaches down to man and says, "Humanity is my mother." Hence, as before stated, he is related both

to God and to man. Why? That he might be the proper mediator.

My friends, have you ever thought why it is that Jesus Christ is going to be the Judge of the world? Why not God judge humanity? The Bible says Christ will do it. "God Almighty has authorized the Son to execute judgment." Why? Because he is the Son of man; and, therefore, humanity will not be defeated by any bias or prejudice or lack of sympathy on the eternal day of judgment.

If Christ had always lived and associated with heavenly things and dwelt in the Father's house of many mansions and then finally judged you and me, I would surely have this kind of a plea to make. I would say: "Lord, I appreciate your candor and your fairness; but I just want to tell you before you pronounce the sentence, 'Depart,' that if you had had to live in yonder old world as I did and mix and mingle with all the allurements, attractions, and influences of earth, and had been subject to the trials and tribulations I have, I know you would have more mercy, more love, more grace, and more favor to grant unto me."

Jesus Christ said: "O, no! Before I came to be the mediator of the world, I lived, it is true, with God. I tasted the beauties, the grandeurs, and the glories of the eternal home. But that is not all. I bade all that good-by. I came to the earth to be in touch with all the infirmities of man. I know what it means to be tired, hungry, and weary. I know what it means to be persecuted and at last condemned and made to die a felon's death. I understand all that. I have lived with you; therefore judgment at the last shall be tempered with mercy, because I am acquainted with the trials and tribulations and difficulties of mankind."

Not only that; Jesus Christ knows all about the things that have transpired. Back in the very beginning of time, when God spoke the worlds into existence and set all in motion, Jesus Christ was present. In the beginning was the Word, and by him were all things created; and when finally Jehovah said, "Let us make man," Jesus the Christ was there. He saw the first pair pluck the forbidden fruit;

he saw God's law trangressed, and saw them march out condemned and doomed unto darkness and despair. He followed their path forty centuries, while the Father was developing, evolving, unfolding a system of redemption, until by and by the climax was reached in the coming of Christ as the Son of God. He is, therefore, qualified to execute that judgment.

But between man and God three things stand—first, the law; second, sin; and third, death. Jesus Christ came, the very embodiment of perfection itself, not as a violator of the law, but as a fulfiller; and when on the tree of the cross he expired, he bowed his head and said: "It is finished."

Paul says in Col. 2: 14: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." In its stead he has given unto us a better covenant, founded upon better promises. Hence, obstacle No. 1 has been removed.

There had been thousands of lambs offered upon Jewish altars, but they only atoned for sins temporarily. Jesus Christ, as the great sin offering of the world, was crucified outside the city's wall, and upon the cross he gave his life as a ransom for the sons and daughters of men; and thus sin is made possible to be atoned for by the wonderful death and the efficacious offering of the blood of the Son of God. Hence, obstacle No. 2 is overcome.

But there is a third. Death stands between man and God. All of us are on our rapid march to the charnal house of death itself; and before friendship can be renewed, before the possibility of a reunion can be had, the last enmity between God and man must be overcome. When the Christ died, when he was buried in the new tomb and there lay for three days and for three nights, and when on the morning of the third day Jesus our Lord, in the final triumphant victory, burst the bars of the tomb and came forth, he overcame death by demonstrating the possibility of a resurrection therefrom. Hence, he is ready to wend his way back to glory, to be seated at the right hand of God

and sway the scepter of authority over all the united forces of earth as mediator between God and man.

But you ask: "What effect did Christ's death, as the mediator, have upon the world?" There are different answers to that. Universalists and Calvinists suggest that it had all effect; that there is nothing else to be done; that "Jesus paid it all," and man is wholly passive and inactive with reference to the matter. On the other hand, I think it safe to say that the Unitarians would declare that it had no effect; that the death of the man called "Christ," said to be divine as well as human, was of no effect whatever.

The truth, as in most cases, lies, perhaps, between the two. God's will must be upheld, heaven's authority must be respected, the dignity of the sovereign government of God Almighty must be preserved; and yet mercy must be shown. When Jesus Christ died on the tree of the cross, God's law was respected, in that atonement was made for violation and for transgression thereof. At the same time there was mercy extended, needing only to be appropriated by every son and daughter of Adam's lost and dying race.

I have read the story of old Zaleucus, king of the Locrians, who lived about 500 years B.C. His government was severe, but just. In one of his decrees he ordered that any man in his sovereign kingdom who was guilty of adultery should be punished by the loss of both eyes. That was an iron decree that went forth from what was considered a hard-hearted old king. Strange to say that, according to history, his own son was the first one to violate it and to subject himself to the penalty. Question: What, my friends, is the king to do? There stand the law and the authority and the responsibility. On the other hand, there stands the father, whose son is guilty. After much reflection, perhaps, history suggests this was the course pursued by the father: In order to maintain the authority of the law and at the same time to show a father's mercy and lenity, he ordered that one of the eyes of the boy be plucked out, and then said: "Come and take one of mine." Thus the demands of the law were satisfied, and at the same time the love of a father was demonstrated. Then it was

that Mercy and Truth met together and Righteousness and Peace embraced each other in the sublimity of the thought that the majesty of the government is maintained and his own character magnified in the eyes of his subjects.

God's law must be respected. At the same time mercy and love are accorded and extended unto men, as shown in the gospel plan of salvation. Hence, Christ Jesus our Lord died the death of the cross, shed the last drop of blood in his body, that he might execute judgment upon the earth, touched and tendered, if you please, by the feelings and passions and weaknesses of mortal man. He comes at last to announce the terms of reconciliation and the final decision. What is the verdict from Him who is the mediator? Turning unto man, if I may thus picture it, he says: "Sir, as the mediator between you and God, I suggest this: That you believe in Him whom God had the right to select [because the innocent party thus has the preference]; that you repent of all your sins; that you be buried in the name of the sacred Three upon the confession of that faith. Now, sir, that is my decision. It is my honest verdict." Then he says to God: "You should forgive their sins, graciously grant unto them the Holy Spirit, and extend unto them the hope of eternal blessedness." God says: "Mediator, that is satisfactory to me. I will be glad thus to do. I will forgive their sins. I will grant unto them the Holy Spirit. I will give unto them the hope of everlasting bliss and all the glories of the eternal home beyond the sunset's radiant glow."

My friends, it is left wholly with you and with me as to whether or not we accept the Lord's terms. If we do, we strike hands with God in Jesus Christ and there become reconciled unto him. If we will not, Christ can but turn away and say: "Sirs, that is my verdict, my decision; and if you refuse, you must subject yourselves unto the consequences that are certain to follow."

So I come at the close again to-night, begging you in Christ's stead, praying unto you to be reconciled unto God.

Accept the verdict and the terms laid down by the mediator, Christ Jesus our Lord, and God will stand upon his promises, for he is faithful; and if our part is faithfully carried out, he will love us and lead us and at last take us home to glory.

Now, while we stand and sing, will you not come?

THE TERROR OF THE LORD

This, ladies and gentlemen, is an exceedingly fine audience on this, the third Saturday night of our meeting; and before I attempt to address you I want to make acknowledgment of my genuine appreciation for your having come. One of the most encouraging things at all is to see manifested on the part of intelligent men and women that disposition to hear, plainly put, what is conceived to be, at least by an honest heart, the word of God.

I want to talk to you quietly, if I may be able, from 2 Cor. 5: 11, where Paul said: "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences."

I am quite certain that there is something wrong somewhere in our conception or consideration of those things that really are sacred, solemn, and serious. There are too many people in the world intelligent about all other matters, but are still indifferent toward Christianity. Somehow or other, the preachers of the country have not impressed upon humanity the solemnity of passing into the presence of the Lord. I do not know but that we may have a misconception, very largely, of Jehovah. Perhaps our indifference, our lack of response to the gospel call, our failure to blend ourselves in harmony with God's will, is due to the fact that we overestimate God's love, his goodness, and his mercy.

I know that, as a matter of fact, you can take too much for granted, you can extend your privileges too far on account of the fact that you misjudge the limitations of the other party's extension of goodness and mercy; but in making that statement I would not have anybody think that I want to narrow, limit, or make finite either the love, mercy, or goodness of Jehovah.

I know that the Bible in John 3: 16, 17 says: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that

whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

I know that we read in the Bible that "God is love," and that we magnify the kindly attributes of Jehovah. Do you suppose that some people think that because of God's matchless and wonderful love he will overlook our indifference, our simple-mindedness, and just somehow or other, prompted by love divine, in spite of our disobedience, will at last bear us home to glory and give us a blissful crown at his right hand?

Perhaps you might rely too much upon that one attribute and characteristic. I have read in Holy Writ quite a bit of the mercy of God, and I know that he is a merciful character, that one of the paramount attributes of his nature is that of mercy, favor, and grace unto the children of men. Maybe, however, that in my unconcern and failure to respond to duty's demand I am blind and deluded by the idea that out of God's mercy, in spite of our failure to obey him, God will take me home at last. I may speak too much and rely too strongly upon God's mercy, love, and goodness.

I remember that David said (and we ought to learn this passage) in Ps. 103: 17, 18: "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting [note now] upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them."

Now, God's mercy "is from everlasting to everlasting," but "upon them that fear him"—not upon any others, but "upon them that fear him"—"and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them."

I want to say to you, my friends, to-night, that any character that can love can also hate. Any character that has the attribute of mercy also must have the antithetic quality and characteristic of vengeance, wrath, and anger. While you are relying upon God's goodness, mercy, and love, don't forget that God hates some things, that God's anger may be

kindled, that God's wrath may be provoked; and hence Paul, in contemplation of the fact, said in our text: "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord." Paul on various occasions emphasizes other attributes, but he said: "Gentlemen, I know God's terror as well as God's love. I know God's anger as well as his mercy. I know God's wrath as well as his goodness."

Now, when you come to balance the whole proposition, I want to say to you that the man that will walk the golden streets of that celestial city is not only the one that is the beneficiary of God's love, goodness, and mercy, but he is the one also that with love obeyed God's will, thereby enabling Jehovah to uphold the law of high Heaven and to command respect for the highest authority known to mortal man.

My friends, there are two books in the world of which Jehovah is the equal author—the book of nature and the book styled the "Bible," or "Revelation." In both of these opposite traits of divinity have been pictured. Where is the man so blind that cannot look out upon the natural world and see the evidences of God's goodness on every hand? Why, the earth out of which we came and from which we get our support is kind and good to mortal man. I look beyond the realm thereof and unto the bending blue of heaven's expanse and recognize that the worlds that float about to-night are but the handiwork of highest heaven evidencing God's goodness to mankind. I look upon the surface of Mother Earth and see it at this time of the year clad in its velvet carpet of green. I have watched even to-day the budding and bursting forth of the fruitage of the earth, the beautiful, sweet-scented flowers, and the atmosphere made vocal with the voice of birds. What for? To brighten and cheer humanity on their rapid march from time to eternity. I have looked out upon the splendid hillsides of this most beautiful section of our State and watched the cattle grazing upon the blue grass there. I have watched the sheep likewise feasting upon the goodness of God. In digging down beneath the surface of Mother Earth we find an unlimited supply of mineral wealth and other resources that may be used for the ben-

efit of mankind. All these things are evidences of God's goodness as revealed in the book of nature. I have seen men to-day turning up the surface of Mother Earth, plowing to make it ready for the seed to be put into the bosom thereof, and by and by the grain shall be cast; and then the ripened fruit will be ours upon which to feast during the coming fall and cold, bleak days of next winter. Wonderful world in which to live, evidences of God's goodness on every hand! And yet I must not depend altogether on that.

I have seen, in passing by, some storm houses—some places of refuge. Why, the man that built those was not ignorant of the phenomena of nature. He not only recognized that God in the natural world is a character of goodness and mercy, but there are evidences of his terror likewise about us. I have read of the old cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum that were buried by a great volcanic eruption. I have read of the great earthquakes which have sunk beneath the surface of the earth men and women, boys and girls, infants and sucklings—all. I have read of the terrific floods that have rushed down and baptized entire cities and swept them from the face of the earth. I have heard the thunder's roar and have seen the lightning's flash uproot mighty trees and rend into splinters the giants and monarchs of the forest. What about all of it? It is but the evidence of God's terror as turned loose in the natural world.

I can appreciate the sunshine and the showers, but am not unmindful of the gathering storm and the oncoming cyclone, the rapid approach of the terrible hurricane that is likely to sweep us away unless we are able to hold ourselves safely behind the sheltering rock. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord."

Well, in the Bible, God's other book, I learn of his wonderful goodness. No man can read the story of the creation but that he is filled with appreciation and genuine gratitude because of the fact that God has made such a beautiful world, that he decorated and adorned it with a master's touch. Finally, from the very dust of the earth

man was created and made to bear the impress of divinity upon his brow and the very stamp of God's image upon his heart. For him who was thus honored Jehovah said, "I will make for thee a helpmeet for life;" and then the fitting climax of handiwork—"a radiant gem, a jewel rare," the brightest, fairest, dearest, and best—was brought into existence for the comfort, happiness, and joy of man. What about all that? It was God's wonderful goodness unto humanity, and throughout the sixty centuries of history there are evidences on every hand of the extended favors and continued mercies granted and proposed for our acceptance.

But the greatest exhibition of the love of Heaven was manifested, not through the Old Testament régime, not by the sacrifices on Jewish altars, not by the offering of the lambs and bullocks and heifers that characterized their service, but in the giving of Him who was to be the great sacrifice for the world. The Son of God left the realms of bliss above and came to earth to suffer, sorrow, and sigh. He came to teach the way of life and to be an example in whose footsteps all should follow. All this is an exhibition of the mighty love and mercy of God. At last, his work on earth being finished, he yielded to the demands of a bloodthirsty mob and was crucified upon that rugged cross for the salvation of the race. He was buried in a borrowed tomb, but by the power of Jehovah divine he burst its bars and came forth on the third morning, thus gaining the victory triumphant over the powers of the Hadean world. He brought life and immortality to light. When the facts of the gospel had come to pass and the great commission was announced, he sent the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles into all truth; and thus again his goodness, mercy, and love were manifested to all the world.

Paul, the peerless apostle, would not minimize that. He would not have you depend less upon God's goodness, upon his love, and upon his mercy; yet in the text to-night Paul said: "Brethren, I know the terror of the Lord. I know God's vengeance. I am acquainted with his wrath and with the fact that his anger may be kindled. In view of

God's terror, wrath, and vengeance, I persuade my fellows. I am not pleading with God or Jehovah. I am not persuading Christ. I am not persuading the Holy Spirit, for the Spirit hath revealed in completeness the scheme of redemption. Instead of all that, I persuade men."

Do you think that Paul was persuading in his own behalf? Do you think his pleadings indicated his inferiority? Was it for lack of something else to do? Was such action on his part a recognition of his inability to measure arms with any other man of his day? Certainly, certainly not. He was without a peer in intellect and in education, in birth and possibilities. "Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Notwithstanding all this, Paul knew God's attributes and Heaven's characteristics. He, therefore, consecrated and dedicated his life to the persuading of men to be and to become what they ought to be.

Commencing with the very first pair in paradise and continuing on down the stream of human generations, the terror of God is seen on every side. Grandfather Adam disobeyed God's law, refused to submit to Heaven's authority, and though he stood created in God's image as our federal head, God said: "Adam, my terror must be exhibited. In-

asmuch as you have disobeyed one commandment, you will have to pass outside of this beautiful paradise." Man must learn respect for order, for law, and for supreme authority. Why? It is for our good and for our ultimate happiness. All and each of us must learn the lesson of submission, of subjection, and of obedience.

When Cain rose up in a heat of passion and slew his brother Abel, a mark of God's terror and wrath came upon him.

A visitation of God's wrath came upon the antediluvians because they refused to respect God's word as spoken through Noah. God demonstrated his terror in that he sent—not the great Johnstown (Pa.) flood, nor that of Galveston, Texas, but he sent a great world-wide flood that swept all beings from the earth in whose nostrils was the breath of life. What was that? It was but an exhibition of the terror of God Almighty.

When old Achan laid his hand upon the gold and silver of Jericho and thus willfully violated the law, God said unto Joshua: "Stone that man. Get rid of him. He must not continue. Israel cannot succeed. Their backs will be turned to the enemy unless you rid yourself of such." The result was that Achan was stoned with stones until he was pronounced dead, as an evidence of God's terror, vengeance. and wrath.

When the Israelites, who carried the sacred ark of the covenant to engage with the Philistines in battle, met with defeat because of a lack of faith in God, the Philistines wrested the ark and carried it down toward the seacoast unto Ashdod. As a result, God's wrath fell upon the Philistines, and they became anxious to get rid of this holy article found in their midst. They made a new cart on which to move it. This was a thing unknown for such a purpose. They tied to this cart two kine; and when all was ready, they started, lowing as they passed along down the way, and at last came to the town of Beth-shemesh. The Israelites took charge of the ark of God and offered the kine for a sacrifice. David, being king of the nation, called a conference of the leaders thereof, and said: "Sirs,

shall we send down now for the ark, or shall we not?" And with one voice they all said: "Send and fetch it." Now watch. David surely understood what God's law was regarding the handling of the ark; but, not content to do what God had told him, not satisfied with remaining faithful and loyal unto the old book, David said: "These Philistines have gotten up a pretty good scheme. Instead of carrying the ark on the poles, on the shoulders of the Israelites, the Philistines have showed me a new plan." So he likewise made him a cart, hitched oxen thereto, and told his two nephews, Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab: "Go down to the house of Abinadab, and there bring the ark up on this cart." As they came on the way, in disobedience every step to the will and to the word of God, what happened? They had come to Nachon's threshing floor, and the Bible says one of the oxen stumbled and the cart shook. Uzzah put forth his hand to stay the ark, but because he did so the record says that God slew him. He died by the ark as a testimony to passers-by that every transgression and disobedience must receive a just recompense of reward.

Then what? David was wonderfully disturbed. There has been a breach made upon Uzzah. So the ark was turned aside in the house of Obed-edom, and there it stayed for three months. After coming to himself and seeing the folly of man's wisdom and ways, he said: "Brethren, I understand why God killed my nephew. It was because we did not bring the ark as he had directed. I know now what to do." Well, what is it, David? "Let's just cut loose from man-made machinery and quit trying to pattern after the ungodly Philistines. You Levites go and bring the ark on your shoulders, as the Lord has said. For because ye did it not at the first, the Lord our God made a breach upon us, for we sought him not *after the due order.*" And the record says that David got busy to do so after the due order.

My friends, it is a dangerous proposition to vary from the old landmarks. You may put it down as "old fogy;" you may say it is "antiquated;" you may call it a "back

number" all you please; but hear it: when the everlasting terror, vengeance, and wrath of God Almighty shall come to pass, I have an idea that those only will stand accepted in God's presence who have stuck to the old landmarks and followed in due order. When a breach is made upon us, some one will say: "It is because we patterned after the Philistines. We have tried to have us a cart on which to carry the ark instead of carrying it as God directed." The "pole fashion" may be out of date, but our hope of reaching heaven at last depends upon it.

It is not in man that lives and that moves to direct his own steps. I am traveling toward that city. I am but a stranger and a pilgrim upon the earth. I have never been over the way. It is not mine to outline it. I trust that evermore I shall have that spirit of humility and submission to our Lord to say: "Speak, I will hear; command, I will obey." I propose not to be wise above that "which is written," for I know God's terror, God's wrath, and God's vengeance unto the children of men.

But I call your attention to this fact: Just before Paul made the statement of our text to-night he had this to say in 2 Cor. 5: 10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

I have heard the story that Daniel Webster was once asked while a member of the United States Senate: "Mr. Webster, what is the most solemn, sacred, serious thought that you ever entertained?" With just a moment's reflection, Mr. Webster said, in substance: "The most serious proposition that ever challenged my attention is the thought that I must appear before the God of my being and give an account for the deeds that I do while in the body, whether they be good or bad."

Friends, have you treated this matter lightly, or have you really studied the proposition? Are you passing through life like a bubble, in frivolity, in fun, and in foolishness? Are you upon the surface, lightly tripping away,

headed for eternity unprepared? Or have you halted and seriously considered whither you are going?

Paul says: "I know that men must give an account. I know God's terror. And to keep my fellows from being subjected unto the consequences of a disobedient career, I persuade them all of my days."

I have called your attention to that wonderfully varied, checkered, and dangerous career through which the apostle passed—the trials that he withstood, the journeys that he made, and the difficulties that beset him in his extended journeys into the foreign land. He carried the gospel of salvation, the tidings of joy, and the beacon light of God to guide the footsteps of his fellows unto the halcyon fields of eternal bliss. As he returned from one of these eventful tours, he said to his brethren at Ephesus: "I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. . . . I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." Why, Paul? "I know the terror of the Lord. I know God's attributes. I know Heaven's vengeance. I know that God will recompense. I know that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, for God will judge his people; and if the righteous scarcely be saved, where—O, where—shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" But Paul said: "Brethren, I persuade men." To what intent? I answer that by a concrete example. When he stood in the presence of King Agrippa, presumably to make a speech in his own behalf, he forgot himself and his own interests. He rehearsed his own conversion and turned to the preaching of Jesus Christ to a descendant of old Herod the Great. In the final climax of this address I learn what Paul persuaded men to do when he said: "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." And the old king, trembling, said: "Paul, almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

What was Paul persuading men to do? Not to vote for him nor to advance his personal interests; but he was spending his time in persuading men to become and to be Christians. And I think it honorable to-night, I rather

magnify my opportunity, to follow in the steps of this matchless man of God. He persuaded men to become Christians—not to pretend nor to appear, but to *be*. There is a difference, friends, between appearing and being. Almost thou hast persuaded me to be a genuine, a real, and a true Christian.

I would to God to-night that all those who love to wear his name and who love to sit under the sound of the glad gospel of Christ were really Christians—not just simply "big-meeting folks," not simply Christians while the fever is on and the excitement up, but every day in the year—on Monday, when there is no preaching, as well as on Sunday when the multitude is assembled and the gospel proclaimed. There are too many people all over the country that are professors only. When the king said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," Paul replied: "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." My friends, that is the philosophy and that is the principle. Why? That the world may escape the terror and the vengeance of Jehovah.

We are rushing toward the judgment. After a while the rains will come, the floods will descend, and the winds will blow and beat upon our tabernacle. I wonder if it will stand.

"Hearing and doing, we build on the rock;
Hearing alone, we build on the sand.
Both will be tried by the storm and the flood.
Only the rock the trials will stand."

Now, having talked long enough this Saturday night, I am glad to extend you the gospel call again. I appeal to you to-night, my friends, not only to appreciate God's love and mercy and goodness, but likewise respect his wrath, his anger, and his terror. Though God's mercy is extended, his dignity and authority must be upheld and his law and order respected.

Hence, I am saved to-night, if saved at all, by the mercy

of God, and at the same time by respect for his word and reverence for his truth.

If you would enjoy the goodness and mercy of God and escape his terror, you must yield in submission to his will. All who are willing to do so are invited to come.

REFORMERS AND RESTORERS

I think, ladies and gentlemen, that I have never seen a finer interest displayed on the part of the public to hear the truth, or at least what I believe to be the truth, than you have manifested by your presence to-night, especially in view of the fact that it is raining and storming; and your having come even through the rain makes me regret very much that our services are so rapidly drawing to a close.

I want to say that I have especially appreciated your presence, and, above that, the very courteous and inspiring attention that you have given to every effort that I have made. God has, I think, bountifully blessed us all, and unto him be all the praise.

I want to talk to you in a general manner about reformers and restorers along religious lines. Time forbids anything like a detailed account of the history that has characterized the church; and even if I were well prepared thus to present it, I could not do so on an occasion limited as this one necessarily is. All scholars practically of note and merit agree that the day of Pentecost was the birthday of the church of Christ. It was then that the material prepared by John the Baptist was builded together, and thus the nucleus was formed. Under the guidance of inspiration and by the power of the gospel, believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. It may seem strange to say that in a space of thirty years, the gospel, starting out from Jerusalem under the very simple machinery that characterized its efforts, spread abroad unto earth's remotest parts, until the apostle declared that the gospel in which the Colossians had been rooted and grounded was preached unto every creature under heaven. He also stated that their sound went into all the earth and their words unto the ends of the world. Their work began in Jerusalem, and it spread throughout Judea, the immediate country, then to Samaria, then to Galilee, then to Asia Minor, and at last across the Ægean Sea, over-

sweeping the country of Europe and passing on to earth's remotest parts. But before the close of the first century the disposition of humanity, in its opposition to submitting to the authority of the word, had begun to manifest itself, and a series of the bitterest sort of persecutions had their origin. Not many centuries had passed until there was formed an ecclesiasticism, the object and purport of which was to direct the religious machinery, not according to the word of God, but according to human intelligence, personal feeling, and opinion.

This grew and multiplied until by and by a regular hierarchy was formed upon the earth. Seeking step by step and order by order to weave itself into the political affairs of the world, it finally succeeded in blending the powers of church and state. The Pope became the highest authority on the earth. Second to him was the king or the ruler of the country. Unto these all powers were granted, and unto these every person was amenable.

But during the time that is incorporated in what I have possibly suggested there was begun what is known in history as the "Dark Ages," lasting for a period of about twelve hundred years and bringing the world down to the beginning of the sixteenth century. At this time people began to open their eyes and cast aside delusions under which they had been, and to exercise more thoughtfulness, greater intelligence, and greater freedom in all matters. This marks the beginning of that period in history that has to do with what we style the Reformation. It is the period of Luther, Calvin, Wesley, and others that towered above their fellows, each one having a special line of thought that he wanted to emphasize and get before the world.

Martin Luther, of Saxony, is the acknowledged leader and head of the Reformation of the sixteenth century. When about nineteen years of age, he became a monk in an Augustine convent. Here he found an old Bible, the study of which soon convinced him that the religion of his day was wholly foreign to that taught by the God of heaven. He was led to see the corruption and hypocrisy of those directing religious affairs, and he set himself to the task of

bringing a change or reformation along these lines. Menaced by the thunders of Rome, he fearlessly proclaimed what he believed to be the truth in the face of all that men or devils could devise to intimidate and destroy him. In the presence of the Pope and under the maledictions of Rome, he said: "I am free by the grace of God, and bulls neither console nor alarm me. My strength and my consolation are in the place where neither men nor devils can reach them."

Since Christ stood before Pilate, since Peter stood before the Sanhedrin, since Paul stood before Agrippa, one of the greatest moral spectacles which this old earth has ever witnessed was Martin Luther before the Diet of Worms. In the presence of emperors, kings, and potentates—all the power and pomp of civil authorities, reinforced by the ecclesiastical omnipotence of Rome—he stood, with the demand made upon him to retract his religion or forfeit his life! His answer will ring down the corridors of time until it mingles with the funeral notes of the last trumpet that proclaims the end of the world: "Since your serene majesty and your high mightiness require from me a clear, simple, and precise answer, I will give you one, and it is this: I cannot submit my faith either to the Pope or the councils, because it is as clear as the day that they have frequently erred and contradicted each other. Unless, therefore, I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by the clearest reasoning, unless I am persuaded by means of the passages I have quoted, . . . I cannot and will not retract; for it is unsafe for a Christian to speak against his conscience." He concluded by saying: "Here I stand. I can do no otherwise. May God help me! Amen!"

He saw the church in alliance with the state, clad in the robes of earthly splendor, purchased in exchange for her virtue.

With a courage all must admire he undertook to reform an institution that had sunk to the lowest depths of corruption and had made merchandise of the salvation of the souls of men.

It was Luther who taught justification by faith in con-

trast to the cold and ritualistic theory of Rome. It was he who unchained the Bible and tore it loose from the ecclesiastical powers that held it from the people. He gave it back to the world and championed their right to read and learn for themselves God's will and way. Of such as was he Mr. Whittier has well said:

> "Let, then, O God, thy servant dare
> Thy truth in all its power to tell;
> Unmask the priestly thieves and tear
> The Bible from the grasp of hell!"

Following close after Luther came John Calvin, of France, emphasizing as no one had ever done the *sovereignty, majesty,* and *dignity* of *Jehovah.* His platform consisted of five planks, as follows: Predestination, Irresistible Grace, Original Sin, Particular Redemption, and the Perseverance of the Saints. By his power and earnestness he made a profound impression upon the world and caused his name to be perpetuated as a great reformer.

In connection with Luther and Calvin there is another not known especially as a reformer, but rather as the founder of the Church of England. When Henry VIII. came to the throne, he was married to his brother's wife—Catherine, of Spain. Unto them several children were born; but all had died in infancy, save one daughter, the "Bloody Mary" of later time. He was lamenting the fact that he had no son to succeed him, when he became attached to Anne Boleyn, the queen's maid of honor. He, therefore, decided to secure a divorce from his wife and marry this girl of nineteen summers. The matter was presented to the cardinal, who at first favored the scheme; but when the final test came, the Pope and the court decided to the contrary. Whereupon the friends of Henry declared him to be the supreme head on earth of the Church of England. In 1533 he married Anne Boleyn; and when the Pope heard of it, he ordered the king to put her away and to take back Catherine. Parliament met the next year and declared Henry VIII. the sole head of the church, and made denial thereof an act of treason.

Thus began the Episcopal Church, which owes its origin

to the fact that a man wanted to get rid of his legal wife in order to marry another, both against the law of the land and of God.

Time rolled on. Another century sped by, and the beginning of the eighteenth found the religion of the world cold, formal, and ritualistic.

About this time John Wesley, of illustrious parentage, came prominently into view. Of him it was said: "He breathed into the nostrils of English-speaking Protestantism, and it became a living soul." With three other young men, he formed an organization or a society the object of which was to emphasize purity of heart and a reality of religion. He stirred the sentiments of his hearers and kindled a zeal that spread throughout the land.

Paul encountered the hate of Judaism; Luther, of Romanism; and Wesley met in nearly every form short of death the malice of the Established Church.

Despite the ridicule, contempt, disparagements, and degrading persecutions heaped upon him by the Established Church, of which he was a regularly ordained minister, this grand man forward marched with an unfaltering step to the accomplishment of the great mission he felt God had committed to his hands.

So I have presented to you in this general way those who were styled "the reformers" on the pages of history. I would not be guilty of causing any reflection or any kind of jeer or sneer at a man of the type thus outlined and delineated. I bow in recognition of the nobility of purpose and splendid achievement of John Calvin, who announced the supreme sovereignty of God Almighty. All of us ought to join in a hearty "Amen." Martin Luther marched out and unchained the Bible from the pulpit and gave it back to the people and announced a system of justification by the faith of God rather than by cold penance, and the whole world ought to rejoice. When John Wesley, that grand, good man, caught the idea that men must love God and with their hearts must demonstrate the purity of life, that they must put their souls into their religion, he but expressed that which ought to characterize every human heart

under the shining stars to-night. But after having said all this, and much more, in commendation and in commemoration of these great reformers, there is not the least reason under heaven why anybody should so become beside himself as to render undue respect, undue homage, and undue adoration unto either.

Was John Calvin crucified for us? No. Then leave him as but a man among men. Were you baptized in the name of Martin Luther? Then likewise let him remain in the place that he doubtless would ask and demand for himself. Was John Wesley in any way our Savior? Absolutely not. It was his one purpose, his very chief objective, to try to reform that which refused to be reformed. There are some things that will yield to reformation. There are some men that can be straightened out from their crookedness and corruption and turned into the right channel. There are others that positively and absolutely refuse to be reformed, and the last remedy and resort is to depart and to seek a divorce therefrom.

I say it in all kindness and to the credit of each of these men that, noble as their work was, they started on an impossible task. Those institutions which they endeavored to reform stubbornly and vehemently refused to yield to the efforts made. Therefore, failure characterized the labors of all three of those men, whose motives, intents, and purposes, I doubt not, were as pure as the drifting snow.

The opening of the nineteenth century found the religious world still in a state of chaos and confusion. Denominationalism, division, discord, and a partisan, sectarian spirit were visible on every hand. The Christianity of the Bible, characterized by its purity and simplicity, had been lost to the world, and infidelity went about waving its blackest banner and challenging the doctors of the day.

Then appeared upon the scene Thomas Campbell and his illustrious son, Alexander, who, profiting by the experience and failure of the reformers, set about, not to *reform* anything, but to *restore* the religion of the apostolic age. They saw that denominations were unknown to the Bible; that creeds were a source of division and infidelity; and that

party names were a curse and a hindrance to the fulfillment of our Savior's prayer. In a "Declaration and an Address" they set forth some general principles on which all who loved God could unite and at the same time no one sacrifice a real matter of faith. Their motto was: "Let us speak where the Bible speaks, and be silent where the Bible is silent."

They, therefore, proposed to the religious world for all to cut loose from anything and everything not specifically in the Bible and to go back to the beginning, back through the "Dark Ages," and on further until all come to Pentecost and Jerusalem. It was their purpose to plant the Jacob's staff at the beginning corner and, with the Bible as their guide, to run again the lines outlined by the apostles under the direction of inspiration. Hence, the work of the Campbells was not that of reformation, but of restoration, of the church of the Bible and the religion of our Lord. For me to say to you that they had the right ideal and the proper conception is but to compliment your intelligence and unbiased judgment. They insisted that the word of God is the seed of the kingdom, and that it made no difference whether or not a single crop of Christians had been produced or a church of God established during the centuries past. Of one thing they were certain—viz., that if the same seed, unmixed and unadulterated, were planted in the year 1812 as were in the year 33, they would produce exactly the same kind of a crop as when planted and preached by Peter on Pentecost. If I were sure to-night that I had the same kind of wheat that was raised in our Savior's day and were to plant it in your county, I would feel absolutely sure that a similar crop would be reaped. Such is God's principle told over and over in Gen. 1. Therefore, I have never worried over "church succession" or the "apostolic chain."

The supreme effort of these restorers was to get all real believers to come together and find out just what God demanded, aside from ecclesiasticism, aside from human opinions, creeds, and speculations. The principle upon which they set to work is outlined by Moses E. Lard, who

was a graduate of Bethany College and a companion of Alexander Campbell. He interpreted the work of the Campbells as follows, and I insist that you hear him patiently: "The restoration was to consist in holding precisely and only what is taught in the word of God, and in founding our practices strictly thereon. . . . It was determined that the final end to which the restoration should look is a complete return to primitive Christianity, in doctrine, in practice, and in spirit. All of which is concisely expressed in the following decision: To believe precisely what the Scriptures teach, to practice only what they enjoin, and to reject everything else. Hence, the restoration proposed was to be marked, positively, by accepting, as matters of faith, what, and only what, the Holy Scriptures teach; practically, by doing everything and only what they enjoin; and, negatively, by rejecting everything which they do not sanction. . . . Hence, all practices having their origin in tradition, human reason, or expediency are utterly eschewed. Such was the restoration proposed by Mr. Campbell and his brethren." (Lard's Quarterly, 1863.)

This is a platform big enough, broad enough, and deep enough for every Christian on earth to occupy and have no occasion to feel that he is making a sacrifice in so doing.

The creeds of the land are a curse to the cause of Christ. They ought to be cast aside, not because of prejudice, not that they were not written by honest, earnest, good men, but because we have God's word, which needs no revision, no amendments, no repealings. The creeds of men hinder the progress of Christianity, divide believers in the Lord, and engender a party and sectarian spirit. In the language of the great English evangelist, I can truly say that if I had my way and all of them were in a pile before me, I would be glad to strike the match and see them light up the heavens in their final destruction and annihilation. I really believe I would be doing that which would advance primitive Christianity in our beloved land.

A further statement of the restorers was this: "We propose to the world that in matters that are purely opinions, men shall have the greatest possible liberty; but in

matters of faith, there shall be unity. Every man may have his private opinion, but he must hold it in check and keep it to himself; and whenever any man, therefore, undertakes to drive his opinion into the body assembled and let that be the standard, then the purpose and the objective shall have been thwarted and turned aside." Oneness was the chief ambition, the end in view; for they realized the force of our Savior's prayer, the last that he ever prayed previous to his crucifixion, when in John 17: 20, 21 he said: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they all may be one in us." Lord, what for? "That the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

The greatest tool that the devil has obtained is not direct talk against the Bible, but the most effective weapon in the hands of sinners to-night, in the hands of atheists and skeptics, is the fact that people who claim to be religious are divided into parties, sects, denominations, and orders unheard of and absolutely unknown to the book of God.

We are reminded of the story of the old character unto whom the missionaries had gone. First one denominational preacher came, then another, begging the old character to become a Christian and enter into civilization. After all had made their pleas, he, speaking with possibly more wisdom and greater philosophy than they contemplated, finally said: "Gentlemen, I have heard your pleas; I have listened to your stories. Why don't you gentlemen go back to your enlightened America—back into, possibly, Tennessee; maybe to our splendid capital—and you gentlemen agree among yourselves, and then come to me, and I will give more respect to your story." Christ had that in view. In the name of common sense and of high Heaven, do you think that any sensible man is going to believe that God Almighty is back of all the denominationalism and creeds and parties that are all divided and contrary and in opposition the one to the other? That very teaching is sowing greater seeds of infidelity and doing more destructive work than all the atheists in the entire land.

My friends, there are some three or four points on which, if the world could unite, other matters would follow in their respective places. I want to suggest them to you in these terms:

1. Upon the right creed,
2. Upon the proper name,
3. Upon the correct baptism,
4. Upon the right order of worship.

All other matters would be but subsidiary and could hardly be responsible for a divided state. Time forbids the discussion of these matters to which they are entitled, but let me just say this: If this world ever unites upon a creed, it must be the Bible, and that alone.

Now, you may take some creed written by man; let its advocates make the finest speech in its behalf, laud its articles, the faith therein, the splendid writings, and the ritualistic form; and when he has done his best, do you think the world is going to accept that? Absolutely not. Positively to the contrary. I might say to you: "Here is a discipline; I could make a fine speech in its behalf; I think good men wrote it; I think honest men were back of it, and it is a fine production." But when I insist upon its acceptance on the part of the people, some man arises and says: "Men uninspired wrote that. I have a confession of faith that was written by just as learned men, just as honest, just as sincere, as those that penned your discipline; and I won't give up mine to accept yours, on the ground that both of them are uninspired." There is no possible union on either of these.

But let me walk up with the word of God and say: "Gentlemen, in behalf of unity and oneness, would you have to sacrifice any principle to lay aside your discipline and accept God's word?" If they were to answer fairly, the reply would be: "No."

Listen: If your discipline contains more than the Bible, it might contain too much; and if it contains less than the Bible, it might contain too little. But if it contains no more nor no less, then it is just like the Bible; and since we don't need two books identical, I beg you, in behalf of union,

to give up yours and accept the article that is genuine in itself. That is what the world must do, if ever union is brought about in that line.

Well, again, if this world unites upon a name by which professed followers of the Lord shall be called, it will not be the name "Democrat." Why, you could not possibly get the world to unite on that. Why? It is not in the Bible. God says not one word about it, and no Republican would sacrifice his dear name in order to accept one of no higher authority and no more divine than is his own.

What will happen if we professed followers of the Lord ever intend to help bring about the union and answer the prayer that our Savior prayed while in the shadow of the cross he bowed himself? It must be a name that all men can wear, that is not narrow, nor limited, nor bound by party lines or ties, or prejudice, in any respect whatever. It shall be the name "Christ-ian," which shows our relation to our federal head—Jesus Christ, the husband, of whom the church is the bride.

As a matter of fact, when a woman loves a man as she ought to love him before forsaking all others—father and mother, home and all—she ought not to want to wear anybody else's name than his unto whom she pledges her life, her service, her all. Enough love for the husband will wipe out a desire to the contrary. If the world, therefore, is ever united upon a name, we will all have to be just simply Christians, without a prefix, without a suffix, without a handle to it, without something added that is unknown to the word of God.

Upon the question of baptism the world is practically, if not altogether, united. Everybody says and knows that immersion is the genuine article.

What is to be the union? Let us stop trying to substitute. Let us stop trying something that is untaught in the word of the Lord. Let us just simply take things as they are; and since already we all profess to believe in immersion and will accept candidates that have been immersed, why not let that settle the question and say we have decided to get together and strike hands thereon?

Again, when I come to the system of the worship of the restoration movement, let me say that they taught that men and women in the church of God, in the local congregation, ought to meet together on the first day of the week, the object of which was to worship God in spirit and in truth. They said that worship consisted of teaching, of preaching the gospel unto the people, of praying to God, of partaking of the Lord's Supper, of the giving of our means according to our abilities, and of singing praises and making melody in our hearts unto the Lord.

My friends, where is the man or the woman who cannot do that and at the same time not sacrifice any genuine conviction or principle or matter of faith? Is there something in that theory or outline that you believe to be untaught? If so, show it, name it, and we are ready to remove that thing. Is there something else that ought to be incorporated in that list? If so, show it, name it, and I, for one, want it before the morrow's sunlight bursts upon the bosom of the earth.

From 1812 on down the line there never had been such a wonderful influence exerted upon the hearts and the lives of men. It swept this country from center to circumference, bidding defiance to all manner of opposition and towering above, like mountain peaks, all the things that challenged or were contrary to the word of God.

I would like to tell you, if time permitted, of the greatest debate ever held in America. When Robert Dale Owen, of New Lanark, Scotland, came to our Southern city of New Orleans in January, 1829, he immediately offered defiance to every sacred and holy thing in religion, and challenged the clergy to debate with him the truth of Christianity. This he had done wherever he had gone. His challenge went out to all America. Why didn't some of the very eloquent and learned doctors of the day respond and meet him? There was a reason. Do you know, my friends, that it was not only true then, but it is true to-night, that any man who is bound by a creed or discipline or a confession of faith other than God's word is not in very good shape to meet an infidel in debate? They knew that Robert Dale

Owen would have said: "Sir, if you believe the Bible to be sufficient and complete, why do you have to have your little supplementary book?" I can fancy the humiliation and the force that such a query would bring. The doctors all sought a hiding place and allowed the infidel to stalk triumphantly over the land. But there was a young man over at Bethany, Va., humbly teaching school; and when his Bible was challenged and the faith in which he believed was brought to task, he rose up to champion it. This was none other than Alexander Campbell, who came to the rescue of the Christianity of God's book; and, with a boldness characteristic of the man, he went forth without human aids or human equipment. He was simply clad in the Christian armor, with nothing under heaven but the sword of the Spirit, God's word. He met Mr. Owen in the city of Cincinnati on April 13, 1829, and continued the discussion eight days, at the close of which the banner of Christianity waved in triumphant victory. All the world to-night ought to bow in gratitude and thanksgiving unto his courage, to his scholarship, and to his ability to rout the infidel from the American continent and to save believers from humiliation.

And yet sometimes some poor, puny, insignificant soul is so low as to speak belittlingly of Alexander Campbell, when, as a matter of fact, if the least thought that he ever had were put into his critic's cranium, there would be an explosion like a bombshell.

Let me tell you, I stand, ladies and gentlemen, in defense of old John Calvin; I stand ready to commend Martin Luther and to uphold the honesty and nobility of purpose of John Wesley; I respect likewise Alexander Campbell. But neither of these men died for me. I was baptized in the name of neither of them. Therefore, I am not a Calvinist nor a Lutheran; I am not a Wesleyan; I am not a Campbellite. This is no disrespect unto those men; but it is because of the fact that there is a name that is above every other name, there is a name that characterizes the Person that was led outside the city's walls and there crucified for my sins and for yours. When I walked down into the

waters of baptism, I was not baptized in the name of Campbell, nor of Luther, nor of Wesley; but into the name of the spotless Son of God divine. I am not married to Calvin, Luther, Wesley, nor Campbell. Therefore, I have no disposition whatever to honor them by wearing their names.

Let the world to-night take its stand upon the Bible as the authority of all religious procedure, under the appellation of a Christian, a member of the body of Christ, over which he reigns as head, and in which God's Spirit must forever dwell.

I regret more than I can ever express to you the fact that after this movement of restoration had shaken this entire earth and made men sit up and take notice of the very fine principle, every plank in the platform of which was based upon a "Thus saith the Lord," by and by a very lamentable occurrence transpired, and that was the introduction into the service and the worship of a thing untaught in the New Testament Scriptures. In the year 1869, in the city of St. Louis, there was injected into the church an instrument of music. The result was a division in what had been a happy, contented, united brotherhood. Its influence spread throughout the land, and about twenty-five or thirty years ago it struck our own beloved Tennessee. What was the result? The tears, the heartaches, the agonies, the sighs, and the prayers of godly, sainted, devoted people, men and women, have been overridden roughshod; and the result is division, even in the city of Nashville—division among people that ought to stand together.

Let me say to you to-night, as before God I must stand, I would rather be the man that walked out and injected the sword into the body of Christ on the cross than to be responsible for having injected into the spiritual body of Christ that which has torn it asunder. Question: Does the New Testament authorize said practice? Is it according to what the Bible says? Its most devoted and sincerest advocate will not so contend.

I want to say to you, without prolonging the argument, that it was a part of the restoration movement to handle aright and to rightly divide God's word into the Law, the

Prophets, and the Psalms. Where, then, do you find authority for instruments of music? Not in the New Testament, from Matthew to Revelation. "But," says one, "I find it back in the days of David and under the law of Moses."

I want to present to you an argument that I think has some logic in it. I march down the aisle to-night, posing as a Mormon of the old type, believing in polygamy, and I come to the borderland and want to pass over into the church of God. Some good brother says: "No, Mr. Hardeman, you must stop just there." Well, why? "Because the New Testament does not authorize polygamy." But I say: "My dear sir, I remember that back in the days of David and Solomon and under the permission and toleration of God Almighty, men had a plurality of wives; and upon the authority and under the example of David, a man after God's own heart, let me pass in with my outfit." "O," he says, "there is no authority in that! We are not living under the same law." Well, all right; I will go back and come again. I have my dear, precious babe, my own child, bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; and I walk down and approach the New Testament church, the church founded on Pentecost, with the babe in my arms, and say: "Brethren, I want to unite with you, and then I want my baby to come likewise." You say: "O, no; hold a while there! The New Testament does not authorize the acceptance of infant membership." And then, with a courage-bidding defiance, I say: "Sir, put your finger on the chapter and the verse where God says you must not." And you have to be as silent as a tomb. You say: "We are not going by what the Bible does not say, but by what it does say." I say: "Well, there were babies back in the Old Testament church under the Abrahamic covenant, and in the days of David there were babies in the assembly; let me bring them into the church." But you say: "No." And I try you on another argument. I pass clear over the church, and enter into the new Jerusalem, and call attention to the fact that there are babies in heaven, and that Christ said: "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." And I press that upon you. I

say: "Brethren, if they were good enough under the Abrahamic covenant, if they are good enough to be in heaven, why not let me bring them into the church?" Let me say that no man can make one single argument in favor of instrumental music in the church that cannot be made in favor of infant membership. Name it. But some one says: "You are prejudiced against the babies." If you would come to my home, you would find to the contrary.

Well, let's try again. I walk down and approach the New Testament church with my animal sacrifice, with my incense pot, and I come to the border line and say: "Brethren, I want to come into the church with these." You say: "O, no!" "Well, why?" "God does not demand it." "Well," I say, "hasn't that been the order? Did not God authorize such in the days of David?" "O, yes; but we are living under a better covenant, founded upon a better promise."

My friends, it does seem to me useless, absolutely useless, to continue a line like unto this. According to the demand of every advocate thereof whom I have ever met, their statement is this: "Brother Hardeman, this is a minor thing. It ought not to be made so much of. I can either do it or not do it."

Since I have been in your city I heard a man say that he preached once for two churches—on one Sunday for one that had the instrument, and then the next Sunday for one that didn't have it; that he held prayer meeting for one that did have it on Wednesday night, and then held prayer meeting for one that didn't have it on Thursday night. If I felt that way about it and loved the cause of Christ and the unity of God's people, I would certainly advise its elimination from the service and worship of God.

Now, friends, with absolutely no unkindness, with no spirit of bitterness whatever, let me say that I cannot help but think that if people loved the union of God's children and the peace of professed followers of the Lamb as they should, they would be willing to lay aside anything not demanded that greater results might come to pass.

If in the city of Nashville the instrument of music, with its attendant matters, could be eliminated, what would be the result? The glad news would sweep over the country unto earth's remotest points, and such a joyful shout would go up as would push forward the cause of primitive Christianity as nothing else under heaven could. I pray God that he may speed the day when brethren may have enough love for God's word, respect for the truth, and love for the brethren that they will not have anything that tends to part the body of Christ. And I say to my brethren who have honored me so wonderfully and who all during my days have given me such fine recognition that, with all gratitude to them, if there is one single thing that they practice and insist upon that is serving to divide the body of Christ and I learn of it, I must say that I am done with them and must seek affiliation elsewhere.

But there is another thing that I must mention, because I do not want to prolong this talk hereafter—viz., instead of relying upon the church of God as heaven's own missionary institution, men have become wise above that which is written and they have taken unto themselves human societies and organizations, thereby supplanting the work of the church; and the worst evil is that the thing is founded purely upon dollars and cents. I have the constitution of the "American Christian Missionary Society," and Article No. 3 says this:

"Its membership shall consist of life directors, life members, annual members, delegates from churches of Christ, and delegates from States as follows—viz.: Any member of the church of Christ may become a life director of this society and a member of the general board by the payment of $100 in five annual installments; a life member, by the payment of $50 in five annual installments; or an annual member, by the payment of $5. Any congregation contributing $10 or more shall be entitled to one delegate in the annual meeting of this society for that year, and any State missionary board or society contributing a dividend

from its State treasury for the objects of this society shall be entitled to two delegates in the annual meeting of the general society and to one additional delegate for every 5,000 disciples in the State."

The Lord Jesus Christ, if here on this earth and in the same financial condition he was in the long ago, could not become a member of that society. Why? He didn't even have enough money to pay his tax, much less to pay the initiation fee.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is wrong. Why? Because, instead of being founded upon goodness and ability and intelligence and religion, it is based, every single entrance, upon a money consideration.

But what else? It proposes to hire the missionaries, to make the trade, to fix their compensation, and to direct their labors. The missionaries are responsible and amenable to this society. Where is the church? What is the prominent thing? A society unknown unto the word of God divine. I beg of you, my brethren, to remember that the church of God is heaven's missionary institution. Let us not supplant it, but let us work through it, and through it alone. Let us not organize something unknown and unauthorized. Lay these aside, and take out from the service that which professedly and admittedly is not commanded of God, and leave off the human machinery, the overhead expense of which is immense. Then what? Upon what God says I will strike hands and take a stand to live and die, and fight it out on that line, if it takes all the summers of our existence.

By so doing, a happy, prosperous, solid phalanx will march under the blood-stained banner of Prince Immanuel, with the sword of the Spirit as our weapon, until by and by this spiritual wickedness in high places will have to take to the realms of forgetfulness because of the forward march of God's united force.

But I have talked longer than I should. Let me ask of this splendid audience to-night, whose patience has been

wonderfully extended, are there any present that want to become simply Christians? If so, will you put your hand in the wounded palm of the Savior? Will you accept the Bible, and that alone, as God's word? Will you become a member of the church of the New Testament, live and die under the shadow of Heaven's banner, and finally trust him for the fulfillment of his promise? Let us stand and sing.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

I must express the very deep and genuine appreciation that I have, not only because of the presence of this magnificent audience, but because of the many things Brother Acuff has stated, some of which were quite a surprise to me; and while it is truly appreciated, the trust shall be cared for in harmony with the thought that prompted the action taken.

To those of you in the rear who cannot be seated I pledge my word not to speak at length on this last occasion.

You have listened to Brother Acuff's splendid review of this meeting and to his suggestions so well made, and now I hope to have your usual attention at this last effort on my part.

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit." That is from the sixth chapter of the book of Hebrews, first to the third verses.

The suggestions here made are applicable to any company or organization. "Let us go on unto perfection." The Bible is a wonderfully simple book in so many respects, especially those parts that have directly to do with man's duty. From first to last, throughout its sacred pages, every phase and condition of life is presented to us under such pictures as carry but two points therewith. In fact, in the final reduction of the complexities of our existence, there are but two things that ought to challenge and interest mankind. I suggest them for your consideration. One is the proper conception, the right *theory;* the other, the correct *practice.* It is unfortunate that people launch out into the activities of life, conscious of their responsibility unto God, without having thoroughly studied the principles

and the theory of our existence among men. When that has been mastered and thoroughly comprehended, there is but one other duty, and that is to fill our obligations, to carry the correct theory into practice, and thereby discharge the duties binding upon us. Therefore the statement in the old terms, "Theory and practice."

It is not only true of our religion and of our Christianity, but it is true of every occupation and every endeavor of life. If a man be a farmer, first of all, he needs to learn the theory of agriculture; he needs to understand the elements that go to make up the fertility of the soil; he needs to understand the nature of plants and the character of seeds and the processes by which certain things are developed according to natural laws. After that he only needs to rise with the voice of the birds and earnestly till the earth and cultivate the crop to insure a bountiful harvest.

If a man wants to be a lawyer, I have an idea that those same two things are true. First, he needs to become acquainted with the common principles of law and to learn the very foundation upon which the laws of our great republic are based. After that he needs to be able to apply the facts of the law and the principles thereof unto the many and varied conditions of our relationships here.

Just so, my friends, to-night, in the proclamation of the word of God, I need to study God's word; I need to understand, as much as possible, the human family; I need to know the way, the path, the outline, that has been left by the matchless Leader of humanity. When these things are thoroughly learned, I should preach the word, contend for the faith, and shun not to declare the whole counsel of God.

I say it to you candidly that I came to you as a stranger from the country and from a small town; but to-night, after thirty and nine addresses in your midst, I would be ashamed to go back home unto those with whom I mix and mingle if I were conscious of the fact that in the presence of any living man I had failed to tell the story of the cross. Hence, in living a Christian life, I have tried to insist upon but two things—that you understand what the terms of salvation are and that you be led by the full appreciation

thereof out of darkness into the marvelous light of the kingdom of God. After that, you take up the line of march and faithfully discharge the duties all along the pathway of life till, worn and weary, He shall touch you as one of His jewels of earth and bid you come home to all the joys of "over there."

Now, in the pictures presented in the New Testament, life has these two scenes: For instance, in the sixth chapter of the book of Ephesians, Paul pictures our career as one of a great warfare, in which he said: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." That is the theory, that is the preparation. Then what? "Unsheathe the sword of the Spirit." March out under Heaven's flag, true to the command of Him who is our leader, and fight the battle until He bids us stack arms on fairer fields and in brighter climes.

In the twelfth chapter of the book of Hebrews life is pictured as if it were a great race track, upon which we enter at the beginning with all our impediments and hindrances laid aside. We are washed and cleansed as a new-born babe. This is the preparation, the theory. Then run in the straight and narrow path that leads from this to the pilgrim's home beyond, until at last we pass under the wire in the final home stretch and receive the crown that fades not away.

But in the lesson of to-night it is not that of warfare, nor

yet that of a race; but, as the matchless apostle said, I want you to view life in the likeness of a great building, in which there are just two parts—first, the foundation, laid wide, broad, deep, safe, and secure upon the rock of eternal ages. Having done that, he said: "Brethren, let us then go on unto perfection." Let us erect the corner posts, then put up the studs, then the siding, then the roof, and at last adorn it and make it ready for God's acceptance in the by and by.

When Paul said, "Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ," I am quite sure he did not mean in the sense of denying or minimizing or repudiating, but simply the application of these foundation principles unto the higher problems of life.

When boys and girls come to school, if as yet they are unlearned and untutored, we begin with the foundation principles of mathematics and teach them to add, subtract, multiply, and divide. When these are thoroughly mastered, we say: "Let us leave these principles." That does not mean that we are never to add any more. That does not mean to deny or make less of multiplication, but it does mean: "Let us leave those principles as such." Let us go on and apply them to compound numbers, fractions, interest, bank discount, partial payments, and the higher problems in mathematical lines. So when Paul said, "Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ," he surely meant for those Hebrews to go on and apply those principles to the duties and obligations of life. Think on his suggestion: "Let us go on unto perfection."

Every word is of easy origin, and yet laden with such splendid meaning. When Paul said, "*Let* us go on unto perfection," it means an encouragement, admonition, and exhortation. When I say to you, "Brethren and friends, let us do it," I mean to imply that I am in; that I will help. Let me say to you that men differ not from other animals of the earth in that they need encouragement all along the pathway of life. The boy out in the field with his favorite dog understands the philosophy thereof; and when on the trail of the rabbit, he encourages, admonishes, and exhorts

him to do his best. The dog, the ox, the horse—every animal, including man—responds to proper encouragement.

I am sure that numbers of us have made various mistakes along the pathway of life. Hundreds of fine boys and girls—diamonds in the rough, perhaps—only need some man to give them the proper encouragement. They, perhaps, need only the spark of their ambition to be touched. After a while, though from a humble log cabin they came, the world will make a beaten path to their door; for, regardless of ancestry and surroundings, "if a man can write a better book, preach a better sermon, or make a better mousetrap than his neighbor, though he live in the forest, the world will make a beaten path to his door."

I think many times that we have the wrong philosophy of life. We wait too often until some poor fellow has ceased to be, until his tongue is still in death; then we begin to sing his praises and cover his casket with sweet-scented flowers. When no longer we can obstruct and hinder, we are ready to sing praises.

My friends, I need no special encouragement then. I know the problems of life. I have been against the difficulties. I have seen mountains rise as almost impossible barriers. In passing along life's way, I need the sunshine and showers; I need the sweet-scented flowers and the encouragement of those who want me to succeed and accomplish humbly that which is greatest and best.

Paul comes as a friend to the Hebrews that were downcast, that were almost ready to give up their following after Christ, that were longing to go back unto the old form of Jewish worship. Paul said: "Brethren, let us not do that. You have laid the foundation; let us go on to perfection." He did not say: "Let me and mine, or my son and his wife, us four and no more, thus do." That kind of a thought never entered his mind. In this world we have our relationships one toward another. In the body of Christ I have never seen the man as yet from whom I wanted to be separate and distinct. I know that in the gospel of Christ and the church of God there are no distinctions.

Paul said: "If any other man thinketh that he hath

whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." (Phil. 3: 4-11.)

Ladies and gentlemen, in the church of God there is no place for class distinction, no place for social distinction. "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." That is the relationship that exists in the church of God to-night. I submit, therefore, that it is not "*my* Father who art in heaven," but every child of God can voice the sentiment, "*our* Father"—not "*my* church," not *yours*. It is the church of Jesus Christ, in which all of God's children are standing upon equal terms. There is no such thing in the church as a distinction between the clergyman and the layman. I am not one whit better by virtue of the fact that I try to preach than the humblest and most insignificant member of the church of God unless I do better, and that does not always happen. I want no honor other than simply that of being a Christian. Sometimes people (and I appreciate their motive to give me honor) speak to me as "Doctor." Friends, I am no doctor. Sometimes they say "Reverend." My name is not "reverend." That word is found only one time in all God's book, and David says: "Holy and reverend is his name." Mine is not. And if I

shall even merit the simple term "brother," I count myself fortunate in such recognition and such relationship.

"Let *us* go on unto perfection." There are brethren in the city of Nashville—men whom I love, but whom I think to be in error on some points. They claim simply to be Christians. They claim the Bible, and the Bible alone, as their sole guide. They claim Jesus Christ as the sole leader. Let me plead with them in persuasive terms from the very depth of my heart, "Brethren, let us unitedly go on unto perfection;" and when we kneel by our bedside tonight, shall we assume unto ourselves anything that tends to divide the body of Christ unless we are ready to announce openly that God demands such matters at our hands? We have the grandest platform upon which any people ever stood. Let us be unhampered, unbound by creeds, unbound by denominational or sectarian ties, members of the church, and that alone, with God's word, and that alone, as our creed. We ought to rejoice and be glad because of such a foundation. Let us, as a solid band, march out under the blood-stained banner of Prince Immanuel and pass from victory unto victory.

But Paul said: "Let us *go*." I am glad my brethren, as well as others, are learning some things. We used to read that scripture quite different. We never did know until recently what the word "go" spelled. We thought that it meant "drag," but it does not. We thought when it comes to business, we must be fervent; but when it comes to religion, let's "poke along" and drag our days by.

Ladies and gentlemen, I submit, as a matter of fact, the church of God demands the greatest activity, the greatest enthusiasm, and the most fervor that men can possibly put forth. I ought not, therefore, be on hand Monday morning and be active until Saturday night, and then drag around on Sunday like I did not have a friend on earth. That belongs to the heathen world, and not to the Christianity of the Bible, concerning which Paul said: "Let us go on unto perfection."

I never did like to drive a horse that it took a fifty-cent whip every trip to get him along. I like to get in a buggy

behind a horse full of life, so that all you need to do is to pull up the lines and give him the word. I like to see him pick up his feet and "burn the wind" down the pike. Somehow or other, I like automobiles, and the best thing about them is that they go—most of the time. We live at a time that demands action, that demands life, energy, thought, and carrying into effect. Paul said, "Brethren, in the religious relationship, simply as members of the church of God, let us go;" and the congregation or the Christian that does not have that element in his nature is out of line with the main thought of gospel truth.

But note the next. Paul said, "Let us go *on*"—indicative of the direction in which we are to move. It is not a question of your having gone, but a question of direction. I never have liked a crawfish, and one reason is that he travels in the wrong direction. I like the fish that has gameness about it, that goes up the stream or down the stream or across the stream—that can stem the tide. "Let us go *on*." But note the next: "Unto perfection." "Unto" is a word of stickability. It is a word of perseverance, a word that means staying on the job, a word of tenacity—that, when once a firm hold is fixed, knows no let-up until the goal is reached.

Let me tell you that all the progress, achievement, and advancement of the world is due to the fact that men and women have gone on unto the accomplishment of their ideals.

I think schoolboys and schoolgirls to-night will remember that Columbus, with a firm conviction of the rotundity of the earth, toiled and met with disappointment one after another for eighteen years; but he was determined to stay with it. He believed in the correctness of his theory, and he worked at it until at last a new world lay smiling out before him.

Cyrus W. Field conceived the idea of laying the Atlantic cable, by means of which we might communicate with another continent. He went at it with all the power of his being. Three different companies were organized, with millions of dollars, and all failed. It is said that fifty times

he crossed the Atlantic, and met with failure on every hand. But he had that characteristic, as did David and Paul, that "none of these failures move me." He had that element of perseverance, tenacity, and wonderful "stick-to-it-iveness," and success crowned his efforts at last.

Young man, there is but one thing under heaven that ought to challenge your concern, and that is for you to determine what is right and what duty demands. When this is correctly settled, let me say that there are not enough demons in hell or powers on earth to prevent the accomplishment thereof. We have just begun to explore the great fields of activity round about us. Progress and science are as yet in their swaddling clothes, and a half century hence will reveal matters of which the geniuses of today have not dreamed.

Paul said: "Let us go on unto perfection." At this time he was in prison at Rome. His case was undecided. His destiny was unknown, and yet he said: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3: 13, 14.) Friends, that is the sentiment that must be ours if success would crown our efforts.

But the last word, briefly put: "Let us go on unto *perfection.*" I do not know what that means. It is superior to the things of earth. It is the objective and the goal and the star toward which we ought to be moving. It means the summoning up of all our powers, the consecration thereof, and the concentration upon one sublime fact—that ideal that determines my success or failure, that toward which all other things are but supplementary and subsidiary. Far away, like some distant star upon the troubled waters of life, the light of that perfection shines, and for its final and full realization all can well afford to labor and to patiently wait. After we lay aside this earthly tabernacle in which we now dwell and launch out across the stream we style "death" unto the grandeurs and effulgent glory of that eternal home, clothed upon with our house which is from

heaven—when this mortal shall have put on immortality and this corruption shall have put on incorruption—then we will enter into that state of perfection characteristic of the heavenly home in the by and by.

Let me, therefore, leave this thought with you to-night: Unto this Christian people, members of the body of Christ, that have laid the foundation according to Heaven's terms, that have believed the gospel with all your heart, that have genuinely and sincerely repented of all of your sins, that have publicly confessed your faith in the Lord, that have been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and have arisen to walk in newness of life—having thus laid the foundation, friends, *"let us go on unto perfection."*

God will help those who help themselves; and if they bear fruit, he will purge them and cleanse them that they may bring forth more fruit—rich, ripened, golden grain, after the sheaves of earth have been gathered in.

I want to ask, therefore, in conclusion, again, are there any in this company to-night that want to acknowledge the Lord as your Savior? Will you lay that foundation, the basis of a Christian character, by obedience to his will? Those of you that have gone in a wrong direction, won't you halt and come back into the fold? Those that have not in any sense rendered obedience to the gospel of Christ and wish or desire to take your stand upon God's word, and that alone, live in his church, and that alone, I bid you likewise to come to-night. Therefore, whosoever in any sense whatsoever considers himself a subject of the gospel call, while together we stand and sing, it is your privilege to respond to-night, if you find it in your heart so to do.

11-10-71

THE BIBLE AND BUSINESS

(An address by C. M. Pullias, delivered before the Exchange Club, Nashville, Tenn., at luncheon.)

Gentlemen:

It is my greatest pleasure to have the honor of being your guest to-day and the privilege of speaking to you. I am very much unlike other speakers, since I have devoted my entire life to the study of only one book, and that book is the Bible. It is, therefore, but natural for me to select a subject which belongs to and concerns it. My subject, then, is "The Bible and Business." In the study of the Bible we have a concrete idea of every legitimate theme in the world. It is, therefore, not strange to think we would find in the Bible the sanest and safest business ideas—yea, the finest guide to business—to be found anywhere. How many business men that feel the use and need of the Bible in their business affairs? By the great majority it is business and religion—the Bible for religion, church, Sunday school, and the sick room, but something else for business. But the Bible has a place in every store and factory and business place, as well as in every home and heart, church and Sunday school, religious gathering and sick room.

It is the Bible that sweetens the air and makes the world a fit place in which to live. But for its influence there would not be an institution of mercy or benevolence on the earth; no orphan homes, asylums, hospitals, or homes for the unfortunate; neither would your present property values be worth ten cents on the dollar. It has not only been the power that reared every institution of mercy and wielded a mighty influence over men and women—morally, intellectually, and spiritually—but builded better homes and raised better horses, mules, and cattle, and its influence has been as marked even on the farm lands. The hand that is under the influence of the Bible has the magic power to make the earth bud and bloom and burst into

golden fruitage. The Bible, therefore, is the direct cause of civilization's advancement; for where it has not gone, the savage man plows the native ox, with the bark of a tree for his harness and a forked stick for a plow, while he lives in a den or a cave or dwells in a tree. The Bible brings him out of this crude state and makes him build homes and schoolhouses, characterized by sanitation and purity—socially, religiously, and otherwise.

The business world would not be troubled again by bankrupts and delinquents if the Bible were the guide; for it says, "Not slothful in business," but "diligent in business;" and, "Provide things honest in the sight of all men." This followed, and the business of the world would be so renovated and overhauled that all the friction, economically and industrially, would entirely disappear, as well as all domestic disorders. The same Bible, furthermore, says that we should learn honest trades for necessary uses, that we be not unfruitful. (Tit. 3: 14.) "Do your own business;" "work with your own hands;" "that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing." (1 Thess. 4: 11, 12.) "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." (Eph. 4: 28.) This would protect the merchant and safeguard the buyer, for all would produce something; hence, all would have something. All could and would meet their obligations; and, therefore, the Golden Rule would become a reality instead of a theory. "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them"—socially, industrially, or otherwise. "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing;" and the earth "shall rejoice" and "blossom as the rose." The Bible bears the same relation to the spiritual world as the sun does to the material world. But for the sun, the moon and stars would not shine; neither would the grass grow

nor the water flow; there would be no rippling stream nor babbling brook. The Bible, in a metaphor, picks open the petals of every heart and twines the tendrils about the throne of God; it picks the frozen locks of frosty streams and sends them singing to the sea; and it kisses bud and bloom into life and lifts the ocean of sorrow to the clouds.

Thank God for the Bible, which is the rule of life in everything and brings faith and hope and love!

I thank you.

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